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Medicinæ Doctoris, Anno Ætatis suæ 70.
Tho: Cross fecit.

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LUCAS REDIVIVUS
OR THE
Gospell-Physitian,
Prescribing (by way of Meditation)
Divine Physick to prevent diseases
not yet entred upon the
SOUL,
And to cure those Maladies which have
already seised upon the
SPIRIT.

By J. A. Dr of Physick.
(Johan) (Anthony)

LONDON,
Printed for *Henry Eversden* at the *Greyhound*
in Pauls Church-yard. 1655.

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To the Right Honourable Dame

Elizabeth Dygby, Baroneſſe of *Geſhal*, in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, Grace, Mercy and Peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

HAving nothing of mine own that is worthy your Acceptance, to expreſs my Cordiall reſpects and thankfulneſſe for thoſe many favours which I have received from you, I have taken ſome ſpirituall Receipts out of Gods ſacred Diſpenſatory which I am bold to preſent or Dedicate to your Honour, becauſe they are ſpeciall Cordialls for the ſpirits, and precious Antidotes againſt the evill of ſad times: Wherein alſo you will finde ſome Balm of Gilead *for the cure of all ſpirituall diſeaſes, if it be applyed cloſe to the part that is ill affected, with the hand of Faith. If theſe things do reliſh well with your ſpirituall Palate, then I am confident you will take ſome time to ruminate hereupon: for I know it hath been your conſtant courſe to Meditate ſomething dayly of Divine and heavenly things; which did ſtrongly induce me to preſent theſe unripe fruits of my la-*

bours to you, which I gathered in mine old age for mine own uſe, according to my firſt Intention. Though I have thus laboured out of my Calling, as I am a Phyſician; yet I am not out of my profeſſion, as I am a Chriſtian.

Now ſeing this Work is come to Publick view, I do humbly deſire your favourable conſtruction of the frailties that are in it, and that you will be pleaſed to vindicate it from carping ſpirits: for I did not write it to pleaſe their curioſity: but to refreſh and comfort thoſe that do any way ſtand in need of ſpirituall conſolation. If any thing herein can give you any reaſonable ſatisfaction, let God have the honour and glory of his own Work, and I ſhall greatly rejoice therein, and ſhall ſtill remain your much obliged Servant,

JOHN ANTHONY.

Thomas Winter his book

To the READER.

COurteous Reader, if thou doſt live under the Croſſe, and art ſenſible of theſe ſad times, or if Gods viſitation be upon thee, which makes thee to ſigh and groan under the burden and preſſure of thy ſorrowes, ſo that thy ſoul deſireth comfort, and thy ſpirits want ſpirituall refreſhing and heavenly conſolation: then I have written this Treatiſe for thee, which I preſent to thy view, wherein thou ſhalt finde the true way how to demean thy ſelf under Gods viſitation, how to bear thy croſſe with a contented patience, how to make the burden of thy ſorrowes more eaſie, or how to be delivered out of them, if God ſeeth it to be moſt for his glory, and beſt for thy good; alſo how to refreſh thy ſpirits and comfort thy ſoul in what kinde ſoever it is afflicted. Here alſo thou ſhalt finde that many of Gods dear ſervants have ſuffered as great afflictions as thou canſt, and yet God did ſend them comfort and deliverance; but ſpecially what Chriſt thy Saviour hath ſuffered for thee, and what benefit and comfort thou maiſt have by it, if thou canſt draw it to thy ſelf, and make a particular application of it to thine own ſorrowful condition, without which it will yeild thee but ſmall conſolation in thy miſeries. If thou doſt meet with any thing here that will fit thy preſent condition, either for edification, or for com-

ſort, *thou muſt ruminate well upon it, to ſuck out the ſpirituall juice, to imprint it in thy minde, and to bring it cloſe home to thy heart, that it may comfort thy ſoul, and cure thy wounded Spirit.* David *found great comfort when he did Meditate on the Word of God.* My ſoul, *ſaith he*, ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and
Pſal 63.5.6 fatneſſe; and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyfull lips; when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. *And it muſt needs be ſo: for this is a duty which God requireth, and he takes ſpeciall notice of thoſe that do practice it, to pour down his bleſſings upon them, as he did upon*
Gen. 24. 63, 64. *Iſaack, who went out dayly into the field to Meditate upon the wonderfull Works of God, and then at that very time God ſent him a vertuous Wife. If the Spirit of God goeth along with thee in thy holy Meditations, they cannot but be comfortable to thy ſoul; thou wilt then conceive aright of the ſecret and hidden things of God, and thou wilt ſee the infinite wiſdom ond power of God in all the Creatures, his goodneſſe and bounty to thee in them, and a glympſe of the Majeſty and glory of the great Creator, God Almighty. His holy Spirit will alſo open thy heart to let in whatſoever ſpirituall good thou reapeſt by thy pious Meditations: For if thou lookeſt upon the creature, and doſt not Meditate ſomething of God in it, thou doſt look upon it in vain, and if thou readeſt or heareſt his Word Preached, and doſt not ſettle it upon thy affections by ruminating upon it, thou canſt not edifie thy heart, nor comfort thy ſoul thereby: So likewiſe, if thou doeſt read any thing in this Treatiſe that is comfortable to poor dejected Spirits, it will not comfort thee, if it be not well digeſted in thy heart, and applyed to thine own*

ſoul

soul. If thou art not acquainted with this holy Duty, I have given thee some directions how to perform it; and if thou doest first practise it upon thy self, to meditate upon thine own condition, what thou art by nature, and what by grace, and considerest seriously in thy thoughts what way thou walkest, what steps thou treadest, and to what end thy wayes do tend, thou wilt not onely come to the knowledge of thy self; but thou wilt also learn how to Meditate profitably and comfortably upon God thy Creator, upon Jesus Christ thy Redeemer, and upon the Holy Ghost thy Sanctifier and Comforter. I conclude with this saying of an ancient Father: Nothing is found more sweet in this life, nothing is conceived more comfortable, nothing doth so separate the affections from the love of this world, nothing doth so fortifie the minde against temptations, nothing doth so stir up man, and further him to every good work and duty, as the grace and benefit of Divine Meditation, and heavenly contemplation.

Thine in the Lord Christ,
JOHN ANTHONY.

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THE

THE COMFORT OF THE SOVL.

Meditation is a Duty which God requireth.

WE read in the ſacred Scriptures that God commanded his people [a], to binde the Words of his Law for a ſign upon their hands, and to be as frontlets between their eyes, to write them upon the poſts of their houſes, and on their gates, to teach them diligently unto their children, to talk of them in their houſes, and to think upon them, when they walk by the way, when they lye down and when they riſe up: all which was to this end and purpoſe, [b] that they might lay up his Words in their hearts, and in their ſoules, to meditate upon them for their inſtruction, for their ſpirituall comfort, and for their direction in a vertuous life, and holy Converſation. This is the counſell of the wiſe man, [c] To binde the Commandments of God upon our fingers, and to write them upon the table of our hearts, that we may be familiarly acquainted with them, and to meditate on them upon all

[a] Deut. 6. 8, 9.

[b] Deut. 11. 18.

[c] Prov. 7.

occasions. *Paul* gave *Timothy* diverse holy precepts,
1 Tim. 4. 15 concerning his life and doctrine, [d] and then he gave him expresse charge to meditate upon them, and to give himself wholy to them, that they might be well fastned in his heart to observe them. Also when *Moses* was dead, God made *Joshua* the chief commander of his people, and appointed him to bring them into the land of Canaan, and to give them the possession of it; which was a work so great, so difficult, and so dangerous, by reason of the great strength of the inhabitants of that Land, as might make *Joshua* to shrink from it, and afraid to undertake it; but God did encourage him by many gracious promises of his assistance, to make him able to effect it, and therefore he commanded him three severall times, to be strong and of a good courage, not to be afraid, but to rest upon his Word for strength and ability to do that work whereunto God had called him, and would assuredly perform his Word, if he did observe to do according to all the Law which *Moses* commanded him, and not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that he might prosper whithersoever he went: Wherefore God saith thus unto
[e] Josh. 1. 8. him, [e] *This book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou maist observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good successe. Have not I commanded thee?*

This is an holy duty which ought to be fixed upon holy things, and performed to an holy end: for it is very usefull and profitable, very sweet and comfortable to every true Believers soul, if it be rightly performed. The Saints and servants of God have been very frequent in the practice of this duty, whose hearts were inlarged to meditate upon heavenly & spiritual things, & they did thereby draw true consolation to their souls.
[f] Psal. 63. 6. [f] This was holy *Davids* exercise day and night; [g] some-
[g] Psal. 119. times in the precepts and Statutes of God, [h] sometimes
[h] Psal 143. 5 on

on his wonderfull Acts, and excellent Works; [i] and his heart found great ſweetneſſe in theſe his Meditations. [i] Pſal. 104. 34

Now then it is richly worth our pains to get this Art of Divine Meditation: for it will increaſe our knowledge of God and of his Laws, it will make grace more fruitfull in us, and our ſorrows leſſe grievous: It will alſo ſtrengthen our faith in the promiſes of God, to make us ſtout and couragious in his Cauſe, to withſtand the aſſaults of the divell, and all the oppoſitions of wicked men. How can we be edified by the Preaching of the Word of God, if we let it depart out of our mindes, and do not chew the cud, and ruminate upon it in our hearts? How can we teach our children and ſervants the Lawes of God, if they come not frequently into our own meditations? How can our wayes be proſperous here upon earth, & how can we hope to have good ſucceſſe in what we take in hand, if we do not meditate ſomething concerning God day and night? If we neglect this pious Duty, we do then eſtrange our ſelves from God, and we bereave our ſouls of thoſe ſpirituall benefits and comforts which otherwiſe they might receive, and we loſe a great part of the comfort of our lives.

But this Art is not eaſily learned, common grace or humane learning cannot attain unto it: for the affections of the heart cannot be raiſed up to heavenly contemplations, if they are not ſeaſoned with ſanctifying grace; neither can they delight in ſpirituall things, if they are clogged with earthly cares, or drawn away after worldly vanities. A true child of God is not alwayes prepared to meditate as he ought, to make his meditations edifying and comfortable to his ſoul: for the inward corruptions of his unregenerate part will hinder him, the thoughts of his worldly affairs will diſtract his minde, that he cannot be ſo well diſpoſed for ſuch an heavenly duty, or elſe the divell will be ready

to ſuggeſt unto him evill thoughts, or to bring into his remembrance ſome of his former ſins, to diſquiet the peace of his conſcience, to trouble the tranquillity of his minde, and ſo to interrupt his thoughts, that his meditations may not be for the honour of God, nor yet fruitfull and profitable to himſelf; and therefore he muſt crave the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of GOD by Prayer.

Rules of direction for our holy Meditations.

WHerefore now, that our Meditations may be holy and acceptable to God, and that we may finde ſweetneſſe and comfort in them, we muſt carefully obſerve theſe few Directions following,

The firſt is, to fix our meditations upon holy things, and not upon that which is vain and unprofitable: for they do moſt conduce to the glory of God, and to the comfort of our ſoules. This is *Pauls* counſell, [a] to *ſet our affections on things above, not on things on the earth*: whereby we ſhall give a clear evidence, that we are riſen with Chriſt from the death of ſin to the life of grace. As our affections are carried, ſo are our meditations: if they are carried to worldly vanities, our mindes will be ſo incumbered, that we cannot freely meditate upon thoſe things that concern the Kingdom of heaven, neither will our meditations be for Gods glory, or for our eternall good. But if our affections are carried toward heavenly things, then our meditations will be ſpirituall and heavenly, and our actions will be tending to the honour of God. [b] *David* ſet his affection to the houſe of his God, and therefore he prepared abundantly of his own proper good, of gold and ſilver which he gave to the building of it. Wherefore it concerneth us very much to keep our hearts cloſe unto God, that our minds may be raiſed up to him in our heavenly

[a] Col. 3. 1, 2

[b] 1 Chron. 29. 3.

venly contemplations, and that he may be glorified in all our actions.

The second direction is, that our meditations must be of the heart, as well as of the brain; otherwise this Duty is not so performed that God will accept it. It is the heart which God respecteth in all our services to him; without which our best duties are not regarded. [c] The blessed Virgin kept all the sayings of the shepherds and others concerning Christ, and pondered them in her heart. Oh, how acceptable is that sacrifice which is offered up to God with a pure and perfect heart? how effectuall is that Prayer which is presented unto him with a true and faithfull heart? how pleasing are those Almes to God that are given to the poor with a willing heart? and how comfortable are those meditations which proceed from an upright heart? The brain may work, and the cogitations of the minde may be set upon holy objects, and all to little purpose, if the affections of the heart be wanting.

[c] Luk. 2. 19.

Thirdly, the end of our meditations must crown the work with gracious acceptance, and this must be the glory of God. We do greatly honour God in our meditations when we ruminate upon his incomprehensible Essence, how infinite he is in all his Divine Attributes, and how wonderfull in all his works: also, when we meditate upon his Law, and upon his gracious promises to us in Christ, if hereby we are brought to reverence and adore his Sacred Majesty, to love him for his goodnesse, and to yield due obedience unto his commands, and if we can rest upon his promises, and discern his wisdome and glory by his Works. This must be the main end of our meditations; and if we do seriously meditate upon the holy things of God to an holy end, then God will accept them, and we shall be edified by them. But if we propound any other end to our selves, whether it be for discourse or vain-glory, or the like, we seek not the honour of God herein, but

we

we delude our ſelves, and defraud our ſouls of that heavenly comfort which otherwiſe they might have.

Fourthly, our hearts and conſciences muſt be purified and cleanſed from dead works by faith, and true repentance, that an holy zeal may be kindled in our affections, and that our ſouls may feel the comfort of a ſpirituall warmth by our holy meditations. For if there be any guilt of ſin that cleaveth faſt to our conſciences, becauſe we have no aſſurance by repentance, that it is waſht away in the blood of Chriſt by faith, it will cool the zeal of our affections, and ſtop the current of Gods aſſiſting grace; ſo that our meditations can make no holy impreſſion in our hearts, no print of Piety in our lives and converſations; neither can they ſend forth any beams of true conſolation to our ſouls. Wherefore if our hearts are not ſanctified and ſeaſoned with grace, our meditations cannot be to the glory of God, nor to our own ſpirituall good, neither can we ſay as the Pſalmiſt did [d] My meditation of God ſhall be ſweet, I will be glad in the Lord. This will move our hearts and affections, and will put a ſpirituall life into our meditations, when our hearts are cleanſed from the guilt of ſin; ſo that we can freely meditate upon the bounty and goodneſſe of God in all his dealings with us: this we may do if faith goeth along in all our holy meditations.

[d] Pſal. 104 34.

Fifthly, we muſt have ſome ſpirituall underſtanding in thoſe things whereon we deſire to meditate, that the holy Ghoſt may guide us in our meditations, and then we ſhall glorifie God, and comfort our ſouls thereby; otherwiſe the thoughts of our hearts will wander, and go far aſtray from the matter, whereupon they ſhould be fixed; and we may eaſily loſe our ſelves in the dark, if the ſpirit of God doth not give us ſome ſpiritual light, to guide and direct us therein, and we can receive no benefit by this holy ſervice, if it be not performed with a underſtanding heart. The more knowledge we have

of

of what we intend to meditate, the more will our hearts be enlarged for it, and the deeper impreſſions will our meditations make in our affections, and the greater will be the comfort of our ſouls. This was the ſaying of the Pſalmiſt. [c] *The meditation of my heart ſhall be of underſtanding.* Thus ſaith *Paul*: [f] *I will pray with the ſpirit, and I will pray with the underſtanding alſo; I will ſing with the ſpirit, and I wil ſing with the underſtanding alſo*: ſo likewiſe we muſt meditate with the ſpirit, and with the underſtanding alſo. How can we learn the Commandements of God, and how can we keep his Law, if the Lord doth not give us underſtanding in them by his Spirit.

[c] Pſal. 49. 3.
[f] 1 Cor. 14. 15

This heavenly wiſdome is the gift of God, which we muſt with all care and diligence labour for, according to this of *Solomon*: [g] *Wiſdome is the principall thing; therefore get Wiſdom: and with all thy getting get underſtanding.* This is a ſpeciall meanes to come to the true way of holy and devout meditation.

[g] Prov. 4. 7.

Sixthly, We muſt dayly practice this religious duty, and if we learn to meditate upon our ſelves, what our ſtate and condition is, whether it be of nature or of grace, it will bring us to the meditation of ſpirituall things.

Though it be a very hard matter for a true childe of God to meditate upon heavenly things for his own benefit and comfort; yet by uſe and exerciſe we may attain unto it, and the ſweetneſſe that we ſhall find in it will by degrees bring us to delight in this pious duty. [h] *For* by this meanes *we ſhall have our converſation in heaven*, though we live upon earth, and we ſhall enjoy heaven and heavenly happineſſe in ſome part while we live in this world: for if we be frequent in our meditations on the Kingdome of heaven, [i] the grace of God will make our converſation in this world to be in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity.

[h] Phil. 3. 20
[i] 2 Cor. 1. 12

The ſeventh Direction is, to chooſe ſuch times, and ſuch places as are moſt fitting and moſt convenient for

for this holy duty, that we be not interrupted by any occurrence of worldly occasions, but that our mindes and our hearts may agree, and go together in our meditations.

The fittest time for this religious service is, when God is pleased to give an inclination of will, and to move our hearts thereunto by his holy Spirit: which time we ought not to let slip, nor to lose this opportunity which he tendereth to us; because it is the time for grace of his own choosing, and the time which he will accept.

If we take this time and set it apart to imploy our selves in this holy service, he will then inlarge our hearts for it, he will direct us in it, and he will graciously assist us with his Spirit, to conceive aright of those things whereon we do intend to meditate. As we must be free at that time from all incumberances by our affairs; so we must retire to such a place, where we may be solitary and private, that our hearts may wholly intend our meditations.

A solitary field is a fitting place to ruminate upon
[k] Mat. 6. 6. the works of God: [k] Our closet is most convenient to meditate on the Law of God. If we choose such times and places, we may freely delight our selves with heavenly and spirituall contemplations.

Lastly, we must prepare our hearts for this pious duty by faithfull prayer, that God will be pleased to aid and assist us herein with his blessed Spirit, to raise up our affections, to enlighten our understandings, and to purge and cleanse our hearts from all sinful thoughts, worldly cares, and from every evill concupiscence, that we may fully devote our selves to the meditation of heavenly things, that this holy service may be performed to the glory af God, to the increase of our spirituall knowledge, to the strengthening of our faith and confidence in God, & to carry us on cheerfully through all the troublesome chances and changes, that are incident

dent to this life: for our holy Meditations will lift up our hearts and affections above all worldly cares, and above all the crosses and sorrows that we shall meet with here upon earth.

Holy Meditation is the prerogative onely of a true Christian.

AMong many prerogatives that a true believing Christian hath above all other men, this is not the least, that he can raise up the Affections of his heart to heavenly contemplations, by the power of the Spirit of grace that is in him: whereas unregenerate men cannot attain to this high degree of true Christianity by all the meanes that art or nature can afford them: for their Meditations reach but to the notions of the brain, and are practised onely by the outward man, which can yield them no spirituall consolation; because they have not the power of grace to move the affections of the heart to heavenly things, which only can minister sweetnes & true consolation to an afflicted soul, and to a troubled conscience, to give them good hope and assurance of the grace and favour of God, and of the pardon and forgivenesse of their sins.

Carnall men set their mindes and affections upon carnall delights; voluptuous men do dayly study how to satisfie their souls with unprofitable pleasures, and worldly minded men set their hearts upon covetousnes, and upon the pomp and vanity of this present world.

These and the like kinde of men are so pressed down with the burden of sin, and they are so encumbered with worldly cares and sinfull delights, that they have no power to mount up toward heaven in their affections, and no hearts fit for Divine contemplations; because they have no interest in Christ; and therefore they can have no spirituall light to discern aright of heavenly things.

But a true believing Christian hath the light of Gods

Spirit to give him ſpirituall understanding, he hath ſtrength of grace to withſtand all ſpirituall lets and hinderances, and to raiſe up his affections above all earthly things, & with the wings of faith he can mount up above all the blocks and impediments, that the divell or wicked men can caſt in his way to depreſſe his ſpirits, and to keep down the cogitations of his heart from pious and devout Meditations.

It cannot be denied, but that the deareſt of Gods ſervants cannot ſometimes perform this religious Duty as they ſhould, becauſe they do often finde the fleſh to war againſt the ſpirit, [a] as *Paul* did, and that they are ſo yoked with their unregenerate part, that when they would do good, either for the glory of God, or for the comfort of their own ſouls, evill is preſent with them, which doth diſturb the peace of their conſciences, the quiet of their mindes, and the freedome of their ſpirits; and doth alſo ſtop the ſweet influence of comfort that ſhould come to their ſouls: but eſpecially they are hindered in their Meditations, which is a Duty meerly ſpirituall, and cannot be performed but by the ſpirit; yet through Chriſt they get the victory, and they will break through all oppoſition, becauſe [b] *they delight in the Law of God*, and in heavenly contemplations after the inward man, and their mindes will be ſet at liberty to ſerve him, though with the fleſh they do ſometimes ſerve the law of ſin.

[a] Rom. 7. 22, 23.

[b] Rom. 7. 22.

[c] Rom. 7. 25.

If we have given up our names unto Chriſt, and are liſted in his roul to fight under his banner, we muſt look for continuall conflicts and combates with our ſpirituall enemies, which dayly ſeek to ruine our ſouls by hindering us in our Religious duties; but we are ſure to have comfort in Chriſt; and power from him to prevail againſt them, and to get the conqueſt over them all, if we can raiſe up our hearts to contemplate his Omnipotent power, his infinite Wiſdome, and his wonderfull care of us.

Sometimes

Sometimes we have conflicts with pleasure, and plenty; sometimes with afflictions and penury, with sin and temptations, with pain and sickness, and with the terrours of death: all which for a time may hinder the freedome of our spirits, that we cannot compose our thoughts, nor settle our hearts for holy Meditations; but we shall recover our selves again by the power of Christ, whose Grace is sufficient to hold us up against all opposition whatsoever, and to set our hearts in such a frame as is fitting for the performance of this holy Duty.

Wherefore [d] seeing we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spirituall wickedness in high places; we must put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devill. [e] Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnall, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

[d] Eph. 6. 11, 12.

[e] 2 Cor. 10. 3, 4.

The same power that pulleth down the strong holds of sin in us, and the sinfull imaginations of our mindes, will also raise up the affections of our hearts to devout and pious Meditations of the heavenly and spirituall things.

The more free we keep our hearts from worldly cares and our mindes from sinfull thoughts, the fitter we shall be for this holy Duty, the better we shall perform it, and we shall reap the more comfort by it.

But unregenerate men are not acquainted with this spirituall armour, they have no power against their spirituall enemies, they have no weapons fit for this warfare: for untill they are brought out of their naturall

condition into the State of grace, & have interest in Christ by faith, they are so clogged with their worldly affairs, so wedded to earthly vanities, and so intangled with the corruptions of their nature, that there is no room in their hearts for any holy contemplations, and they have no grace that can give them strength to fight against the allurements of the world, the intisements of the flesh, and the cunning stratagems of the devill.

How dreadfull it is to Meditate on God.

NOw prepare thy heart, and all the faculties of thy soul by those former Directions, and by prayer to
[a] Neh. 1. 5. Psal. 47. 2. Dan. 9. 4. meditate on [a] the great and terrible God, who in himself is infinite in Majesty, and eternall in glory, and the great Creator of heaven and of earth, whose Essence and Being is incomprehensible: for thou canst not but stand confounded at the consideration of his greatnesse, which the blessed Angels are not able to comprehend.

Wherefore, empty thy heart of all sinfull cogitations, and lay aside all thy worldly cares, that thou maist freely set thy minde upon God, to contemplate with all fear & due reverence something of his excellencies and greatnesse, so far as God hath revealed himself, and according to the measure of that heavenly knowledge which he hath given thee: let thy Meditations of these things be guided with good understanding, and let them be bounded with Christian sobriety, lest thou be swallowed up in the depth of this infinite and incomprehensible Ocean.

Let thy faith regulate thee in thy Meditations: for what thou canst not comprehend thou art bound to believe, because thou dost deal with the hidden things of
[b] Joh. 5. 6. God, [b] who is Truth it self.

Thus meditate with dreadfull reverence on the high and

and mighty God: for as he is infinite in his Essence, so he is also infinite in all his Divine Attributes: Wherefore content thy self with what he hath revealed in his Word, and by his Works, and do not curiously search into those things, which are not yet to be known, but are sealed up in his own secret counsell, untill he shall be pleased hereafter to reveal them.

[c] The Lord smote the men of *Bethshemesh* with a very great slaughter, because they looked into the Ark of the Lord, which was not lawfull to any, save onely to *Aaron* and his sons. [c] 1 Sam. 6. 19.

Beware then, that he smite not thee, if thou presumest to look further into his secret counsells than Christ hath revealed.

If we duly consider the transcendent majesty and glory of God, it will cast great dreadfullnesse into our Meditations: for it will dazel the eye of our understanding far more than the brightnesse of the Sun beames can dazel the eyes of our bodies, which may strongly move us to a dreadfull fear and reverence of him: [d] for, as *Elihu* said to *Job*, *with God is terrible majesty*. Also, *Job* speaketh thus of God to his three friends. [e] *Shall not his his excellency make you afraid? and his dreadfull upon you?* [f] *How dreadfull*, saith *Jacob*, *is this place?* and it was because God was there. [d] Job 37. 22. [e] Job 13. 11. [f] Gen. 28. 17.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts by his Prophet: [g] *I am a great King, and my Name is dreadfull among the Heathen.* [g] Mal. 1. 14.

[h] When God gave the Law at *Mount Sinai*, the sight was so terrible that *Moses* himself said, *I exceedingly fear and quake*. [i] *Moses* did earnestly desire to see the face of God, to whom he gave this answer, that no man could see him and live; but yet (to satisfie his request, and to shew him in part what a terrible and glorious God he was) he told *Moses* that he should see some piece of his glory: but he added, that it was needfull he should hide himself in the hole of a rock, and be co- [h] Heb. 12. 21. [i] Exod. 34.

vered with Gods own hand for his defence, while God in some measure of his Majesty, did passe by in his glory. And when he was past, God took away his hand, and suffered him to see his hinder parts onely, which was notwithstanding most terrible to behold.

k Dan. 7. k *Daniel* also did see in a vision the Majesty of this great and terrible God, which is recorded in the sacred Scriptures, to teach us thereby what a Prince of Majesty is, and how dreadfull in his judgements, when he is offended.

Now consider what maketh it so dreadful to Meditate on God; it is not onely the consideration of his incomprehensible and Divine Essence, or the transcendent glory of his sacred Majesty, or his infinite Power, whereby all creatures, all principalities and powers are under his subjection; but also the consideration of the frailty and weakness of our nature, and the vileness of our condition by reason of our many sins, wherewith we have offended him, and justly incurred his high displeasure, and have deserved his wrath and fury to be poured out upon us, whereby we stand in continuall fear of his judgements, and of the severity of his justice.

For if we have a true sight of our own baseness, that we are but as clay in the hand of the Potter, or as an earthen pitcher which is easily broken in pieces, we cannot but be afraid to draw near so great and glorious a Majesty, to contemplate his greatness and power, the breath of whose Nostrils is able to consume us.

But if we consider that our sins have laid us open to the rigour of his justice, and have justly moved him to pour down upon us the full vialls of his wrath and indignation to our eternall destruction; it must needs then strike terrour into our hearts, when we come before him in our heavenly Meditations: for he is a sin-

l Heb. 12. revenging God, l and a consuming fire, he will suffer no sin to go unpunished.

This

This doth make our ſins the more hainous, and the puniſhment of them the more grievous; becauſe they are committed againſt an Omnipotent and moſt glorious God, from whom we had our firſt being, and from whoſe goodneſſe we do dayly receive all bleſſings, both ſpirituall and temporall that are needfull for us.

Wherefore we cannot Meditate with comfort upon God, when the guilt of our ſins cleaveth to our ſouls: We cannot chearfully lift up our hearts unto him, when our conſciences do accuſe us of ſin, that we have offended God our Creator, and that we lye under the curſe of his Law, and are in continuall expectation to have the penalty of it inflicted upon us, which we know we have juſtly deſerved.

Thus it is with us until we can apprehend God to be reconciled unto us by the merit of the death of Chriſt, which we muſt apply to our own hearts by faith.

When God doth viſite us with afflictions and troubles, as he hath done to many of his dear ſervants, that we feel the ſmart of his rod, and his hand heavy upon us, it will take away the comfort of our Meditations, and make us afraid of his judgements, as it was with holy *Job*, *David* and others; becauſe ſometimes they are very terrible to us.

Thus ſaith *Job* unto God in his afflictions: [m] *Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid.* [m] Iob. 13. 21.

Again he ſaith thus, [n] *The terrours of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.* [n] Iob 6. 4.

If God be ſo dreadfull to his own ſervants, how then can the wicked and ſinners appear before him? how can they withſtand his judgements, or beat the fierceneſſe of his wrath and fury? he caſt the diſobedient Angels out of heaven without any hope of redemption; he caſt *Adam* out of Paradiſe, and laid a ſevere curſe upon the earth for his ſake, and upon all his poſterity for his ſin: he drowned the whole world, and con-

consumed *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* with fire: he gave his own people into the hands of their enemies for their transgressions, and brought grievous judgements upon many particular offenders. Wherefore we cannot deny but that the Meditation of these and the like works of Gods justice must needs be dreadful and uncomfortable to us, if we look onely upon the justice of God, and not also upon his mercy.

But above all it is most dreadfull to Meditate upon the day of judgement, when we must appear before this great and terrible God, to give a strict account unto him of whatsoever we have done here in the flesh, whether it be good or evill.

Joel. 2. 11. o That day is great and terrible, who can abide it? Then shall all our secret sins be brought to light, and laid open to the view of heaven and earth, then it wil appear how we have served God, what good we have done, and what evill we have shunned, and then we must answer for every idle word that we have spoken.

Then shall be great confusion both in heaven and in
p Luk. 21. 27. earth, to the astonishment of all Nations: for, p they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and glory, and with great authority
q 2 Cor. 5. 10. and majesty. q All must then be presented before the
r 1 Cor. 4. 5. judgement seat of Christ, r who will bring to light those things that were hidden in darkness, and will manifest all the thoughts of every mans heart.
s Luk. 23. 30. Rev. 6. 16 s Then the wicked shall say to the hills, fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the anger of the Lamb, because the great day of wrath is come.

This terrour will be so unspeakable, that it will make every mans heart to tremble: for the just men, and the Angels themselves are said to fear; surely then it must needs be dreadfull to think upon it.

What a fearfull day will it be to careless and loose livers,

livers, who carry the guilt of ſin upon their ſouls with them unto judgement? how will it terrifie them when they ſee ſuch dreadfull feares and miſeries to ruſh in upon them?

[t] Then they ſhall ſee the Sun to be darkened, and the moon not to give her light; then the Stars ſhall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens ſhall be ſhaken. [t] Math. 24. 29.

Thus ſaith the Prophet, [u] *The earth ſhall remove out of her place in the wrath of the LORD of hoſts, and in the day of his fierce anger, and it ſhall be as the chaſed Roe, and as the ſheep that no man taketh up.* [u] Iſa. 13. 13, 14.

Then ſhall they ſee all ſepulchers open, and to yield forth their dead bodies of all men, high and low, rich and poor, to ſtand there naked before the Judge, and before his Angels, and in the face of all creatures: their ſins ſhall be revealed, their ſecret offences ſhall be laid open, and they ſhall be conſtrained to give an account of thoſe things, whereof they would diſdain to have been told in this life.

Conſider now who can Meditate upon the eternall God, this great and terrible Judge without much fear and dread, if he cannot appear before him with a good conſcience; and who can think upon that fearfull day of account without much terrour and trouble of ſpirit, if he hath not ſome good aſſurance of the pardon of his ſins by his true repentance, and that he is reconciled to God by faith in Chriſt? Wealth and honours cannot help, the Judge will not be partiall, neither will he be corrupted, an evill conſcience will not be ſilent, no interceſſion of worldly friends can prevail at that day: all things wil cry for vengeance upon the wicked and reprobate, to yield them cauſe of fear and terrour; but nothing will yield them any hope of comfort.

Above them ſhall be their dreadfull Judge, who is offended with them for their wickedneſſe; beneath them they ſhall ſee hell open, and the cruell furnace ready

boyling to receive them; on their right hand their ſins accuſing them; on the left hand the divels are ready to execute Gods eternall ſentence of condemnation upon them; within them is conſcience gnawing like the worm that dieth not, becauſe it is full of the guilt of ſin, without them all damned ſouls are howling and yelling, and on every ſide the whole world is burning. What ſhall a wretched ſinner now do, that carrieth the guilt of his ſins with him to this great day of judgement? how can his heart bear theſe fearfull perplexities? What way will he take to eſcape this dreadfull judgement? to go back it is impoſſible, to go forward is intollerable, death will flee from him, the grave cannot hold him, the hills cannot cover him, but there he muſt ſtand as a miſerable forlorn and deſperate wretch, untill he receive this dolefull and irrecoverable ſentence. Go ye curſed into everlaſtingfire; the thought of theſe things cannot be but moſt terrible.

Now it concerneth every one to ſet his heart in an holy frame of fear and reverence, and to humble his ſoul greatly before God, when he intendeth to ruminate upon the glorious Majeſty of this great Judge, or upon this great and terrible day, when a moſt ſevere account ſhall be required of every one, of whatſoever they have done in this life, whether it be good or evill; alſo when they meditate on the fearfull ſentence which ſhall then be pronounced againſt all offenders, and executed upon them to all eternity, without any hope of eaſe or remedy.

This is not to deter or affright us from an holy & pious Meditation of theſe things, though they be very ſad and dolefull to naturall men, neither is it to drive us into deſpair, as if there were no hope to ſtand before this Judge with comfort at that day, or to avoid that dreadfull ſentence of condemnation: but it is to ſtir us up to uſe all care and diligence to make our peace with God in time, and to get a modeſt and a ſober aſſurance of the

the pardon of our ſins by repentance; and that by a true and lively faith we may be united unto Chriſt our bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer, who ſhall be then our Judge.

This conſideration muſt needs comfort us much, if we have any clear evidence that we belong unto Chriſt. To this end [u] Chriſt foretold his diſciples the fearfull manner of his coming to judgement, that they ſhould watch and pray, that ſo it might not come ſuddenly upon them, to finde them ſleeping in ſecurity, or unprepared for it; and what he ſaid unto them, he ſaith unto all, that we ſhould alſo watch and pray, to eſcape the great danger of that terrible day, and to ſtand with confidence before the throne of the Son of Man at that time. [u] Mark 13.

When [x] *Peter* had deſcribed with what terrour the Lord would come to judgement, he exhorteth us to an holy converſation, and to godlineſſe, looking for, and haſting unto the coming of the day of God, and therfore to be diligent that we may be found of him in peace, without ſpot and blameleſſe. [x] 2 Pet. 3. 10, 11, 12.

Thus we may meet the day of judgement with comfort, if we can earneſtly long after it, and can heartily deſire to meet our Lord Chriſt, when he cometh in the clouds unto judgement; which we cannot do untill we find by due examination that we are in the ſtate of grace, and that by faith we are inveſted into the new Covenant, and have lived unto God, and not unto our ſelves.

Wherefore thus ſaith the ſon of *Sirach*, [y] *Before judgement examine thy ſelf, and in the day of viſitation thou ſhalt find mercy.* [y] Eccl. 18. 20.

And as *Paul* ſaith, [z] *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged.* [z] 1 Cor. 11. 31.

This trying and judging of our ſelves muſt be done in this life: for after death there is no faith, no repentance, and no reformation of life: if we die in our ſins,

they will follow us unto judgement, and accuſe us before the great Judge of heaven and earth, and they will cry in the ears of God for the ſentence of condemnation to be paſſed againſt us, which alſo will preſently be put in execution to the utter deſtruction of our ſouls and bodies in everlaſting burnings.

How to Meditate comfortably on God.

IF we deſire to make our Meditations on God to be comfortable to our ſouls, we muſt not look onely upon his greatneſſe, but alſo upon his goodneſſe: for our ſhallow Meditations cannot reach ſo far, as to draw any true comfort to our ſelves from the conſideration of of his greatneſſe and power, unleſſe we do alſo look upon his goodneſſe to us in Chriſt, which doth open a fountain of true conſolation to us, not onely in our Meditations of him, but alſo in our ſufferings for him. So likewiſe if we look onely upon the juſtice of God without any relation to his mercies in Chriſt, we ſhall find little comfort in our Meditations of him: for we cannot but quake and tremble at the ſeverity of his juſtice; becauſe we have broken all his commandements, and have tranſgreſſed his Law, and therefore we lye under the curſe and penalty of it.

Alſo, if we look vpon our ſelves altogether as we are by nature, polluted and ſtained with the guilt of ſin, both originall and actuall, without any relation to the blood of Chriſt by faith, it will make us aſhamed to come into the preſence of God, and afraid to think upon him; becauſe he is a ſin-revenging God, and will not ſuffer ſin to go unpuniſhed.

But thus we ſhall have comfort in our Meditation of God, if we look upon him in Chriſt by faith, for then we ſhall ſee that Chriſt hath wrought our reconciliation with him by his death, that he hath made

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an atonement for us, that he hath ſatisfied his juſtice, and the penalty of the Law by the merit of his blood, and that he hath taken the guilt of our ſins upon himſelf, and hath nailed it to his own croſſe, [a] *and therefore we are juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt; whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſſe,* that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus. [a] Rom. 3. 24, 25, 26.

Wherefore as *John* ſaith. [b] *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins, and not for ours onely, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world.* [b] 1 John 2. 1, 2.

The ſame *John* doth expreſſe the wonderfull love of God to us, in theſe words: [c] *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his ſon to be the propitiation for our ſins.* [c] 1 Joh. 4. 10.

Now we may receive plenty of ſpiritual comfort, when we meditate on God, either in his greatneſſe or in his goodneſſe, in his juſtice, or in his mercy: for by this atonement, which Chriſt hath made for us, God doth not now look upon us as his enemies, or as rebels to him; but he takes us for his own people, and as his ſervants, [d] according to his promiſe in the new Covenant: and alſo as his children by adoption in Chriſt, which makes the Meditations of our hearts ſweet and comfortable to our ſouls. [d] Ier 31. 33.

It is a great honour to be ſervants to an earthly Prince; but it is a far higher title of honour to be ſervants to the King of heaven.

The holy Patriarchs and Prophets, all the Apoſtles and Saints of God, did account it their higheſt honour to be the ſervants of God, and they did much glory in this honourable title.

Thus ſaith that Kingly Prophet *David*: [e] *O Lord, truely I am thy ſervant, and the ſon of thy handmaid: thou haſt looſed my bonds.* [e] Pſal. 116. 16.

David

David uſeth this as a ſtrong motive to God, to hear his
f Pſal. 86. 2, 4, 16. prayers, and to grant his requeſts. f *O thou my God, ſave thy ſervant that truſteth in thee. Rejoyce the ſoul of thy ſervant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my ſoul. O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me, give thy ſtrength unto thy ſervant, and ſave the ſon of thine handmaid.*

God gave this title of honour to his choiſeſt ſervants, as to *Abraham*, to *Jacob*, to *Moſes*, to *David*, *Job*, *Zorobabel*, and to CHRIST himſelf, as he was
g Zech. 3. 8. man: For thus he ſaith by his Prophet, g *Behold, I will bring forth my ſervant, the Branch.*

This honour have all they that truly believe in Chriſt, becauſe he hath reconciled them to God his Father, and hath made them his ſervants by grace.

Wherefore now, if we have any clear evidence to our conſciences, that we are the ſervants of God by vertue of this atonement, if we do ſerve and obey him with faithfull hearts, in ſincerity and in truth; we may then cheerfully fix our Meditations upon God, which will be acceptable in his ſight, and comfortable to our own ſouls. For by this ſweet relation that we have unto God through faith in Chriſt, our duties and ſervices to him will be accepted, though they be imperfectly performed by us, if we ſhew our beſt care to pleaſe him from an upright heart, as his faithfull ſervants ought to do. Alſo we may apply our ſelves by holy ſupplications to our heavenly Lord, as being his ſervants to protect us from our enemies, to provide for us in our neceſſities, to ſuccour us in our tribulations, and to countenance us as his ſervants in all our temptations, that our faith may not fail us, and that our ſpirits may not ſink under the burden of them.

Whatſoever we want we may have it of God, and whatſoever we fear may come upon us, he will prevent it, or fit us for it, or elſe he will ſanctifie it for our good, that we may find comfort in it. Wherefore we need not be afraid to contemplate his greatneſſe, for his good-

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neſſe will ſweeten that fear; we need not fear death in a ſervile way, for it hath no ſting to hurt us: and we need not be terrified at the Majeſty of the great Judge of quick and dead, nor at the rigour and ſeverity of his juſtice at the day of judgement; for Chriſt Jeſus ſhall be then our Judge, who is now our Saviour and Redeemer.

We cannot then but ſhew our duty to God, and our love to Chriſt by our willing and ready obedience to the commands of God, and by our thankfull remembrance of our Redemption wrought by Chriſt, by ruminating on his Word, and by contemplating his wonderfull works: our thoughts will be continually upon him, our delight will be to Meditate on him, and the affections of our hearts will be alwayes towards him

Conſider further what Chriſt hath done for us, that we may the more comfortably Meditate on God: he hath not onely redeemed us out of the ſervitude of ſin and Satan, and made us the ſervants of God by grace; but alſo, [h] *he hath given power to as many as believe on his Name to become the ſons of God*; which priviledge and honour we have onely by faith, [i] *who hath redeemed us that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons. And becauſe we are ſons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his ſon into our hearts, crying Abba Father.*

[h] John 1. 12

[i] Gal. 4. 5, 6.

How comfortable then will our Meditations be to our ſouls, when we ruminate upon God as he is our Father? what can deject our ſpirits, or make us afraid, if we have a ſure confidence that God is our Father? Can we be brought to a lower degree of miſery, than [k] the poor prodigall in the Goſpel was? and yet when he remembred his Father, he was comforted and refreſhed.

[k] Luk. 15. 18, 19.

Can any poor ſoul be deeper plunged in ſin, or lead a more vicious life than this prodigall did? and yet his Father did not caſt him off, but upon his true ſubmiſſi-

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on he received him again as his ſon. Why then ſhould we deſpair of mercy, though our ſins are many and very great?

Why ſhould we fear the terrours of death, if we be well perſwaded of our adoption? for [1] *we are heirs of* Gal. 4. 7. *God through Chriſt*, and we go to poſſeſſe that inheritance which belongeth to us as ſons; and why ſhould the thought of the day of judgement be terrible to us, ſeeing Chriſt our Redeemer will make up our accounts for us, and will perfect with his own righteouſneſſe whatſoever is wanting on our parts? Do we think that Chriſt will redeem us out of the bondage of Satan, and will free us from the ſtrictneſſe of the Law, the dominion of ſin, & from the ſting of death, and at laſt will leave us to our ſelves to anſwer the rigour of Gods juſtice for whatſoever we have done here in the fleſh? Surely no: for then the Work of our Redemption had not been perfectly finiſhed; but Chriſt will be then our hiding place, he will cover all our ſins under the Robe of his own Righteouſneſſe, and will ſhelter us from the fierceneſs of Gods wrath, and from the ſeverity of Gods juſtice.

We have now much matter for Divine and Heavenly Meditations to comfort and refreſh our languiſhing ſouls, when they are any way perplexed with ſorrowes, feares, or doubtings, if we ruminate upon our happy condition by being in grace and favour with God: for we have the honour and dignity to be the ſervants of the great King of heaven and earth by the right of purchaſe, and ſo are none but ſuch onely whom Chriſt hath bought with his own blood.

Alſo, if we Meditate upon our Adoption it wil be very comfortable to us, and exceeding ſweet to our ſpirituall taſte: for Chriſt hath given us hereby all the priviledges of ſons, both in what we are freed from, and in what we have right unto: for we are freed from all evill of ſin, and from all evill of puniſhment; ſin hath no power

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to condemn us, though it will ſtill moleſt and trouble us; and there is no evill in our afflictions and ſufferings, becauſe the nature of them is changed into Fatherly chaſtiſements, which conduce to our good, and not to our hurt. Alſo, we may draw great conſolation from our Adoption, if we Meditate upon the right, which we have thereby to all the promiſes of God, to all his holy Ordinances, to all his bleſſings, to whatſoever is good for us, or we ſtand in need of, and alſo to an heavenly inheritance after this life is ended.

If we conſider the mercies of God to us in Chriſt, they will afford us matter enough of comfortable Meditations: for if we ſearch the Scriptures, [m] we ſhall find *a fountain of mercy that God hath opened to the houſe of David, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, for ſin and for uncleanneſſe*; wherein we may waſh away all the guilt and ſtains of our ſins, if we can apply the ſtreames thereof to our hearts by faith: this Fountain is the blood of Chriſt, which the holy Ghoſt here meaneth; [n] *In Chriſt we ſhall finde water of life to refreſh our panting ſouls*, when we are in any diſtreſſe, or lye languiſhing under the ſenſe of our ſins.

[o] *Chriſt is alſo the bread of life, whereof if we eat by faith, we ſhall live for ever.* [p] *Thus Chriſt is made all in all to us by faith:* [q] *for he is made unto us wiſdome, and righteouſneſſe, and ſanctification and redemption.*

His wiſdome will teach us the way of truth, it will guide us in it, and it will diſpoſe of all things for our good.

His Righteouſneſſe is a garment of ſalvation to us; his Spirit of grace will inrich us with all heavenly endowments, to lead an holy and ſanctified life and converſation.

Alſo, [r] *by his redemption all our iniquities are forgiven, all our ſpirituall diſeaſes are healed, our life is redeemed from deſtruction, and we are crowned with loving kindneſſe and tender mercies.*

[m] Zech. 13. 1.

[n] Joh. 4. 10

[o] John 6. 48. 58.

[p] Col. 3. 11

[q] 1 Cor. 1 13.

[r] Pſal. 103 3. 4

Let us conſider alſo for our further comfort in our
[r] Eph. 3. 17 Meditations on God, [r] *that Chriſt the eternall ſon of God, doth ſpiritually dwell in our hearts by faith*, and he doth not come to lodge with us as a gueſt, or to ſojourn there for a time, and then to be gone from us; but he cometh to abide and to dwell with us for ever, he hath taken up his habitation there, and our faith will cleave ſo cloſe to him, that he will never depart from us, neither will he ſuffer us to depart from him.

We read that *Ittai* the *Gittite*, one of *Davids* worthies would not leave the King when he fled from his ſon *Ab-*
[s] 2 Sam. 15 21 *ſalom*, but he anſwered the King in this manner: [s] *As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the King liveth, ſurely, in what place my Lord the King ſhall be, whether in death or life, even there alſo will thy ſervant be.*

Thus cloſe doth our faith cleave unto Chriſt: for it will not ſuffer us to leave him, neither will he leave us, but our faith will be ſtill with Chriſt, both in life and in death.

O happy is our condition if we have ſuch an Inhabitant in our hearts: if Chriſt hath ſetled his abode there, he wil execute his Prieſtly Office, to make interceſſion
[t] 2 Pet. 2. 3 to his heavenly Father for us, [t] and he wil make us a royall prieſthood to offer up our ſelves and our prayers unto God, and to preſent unto him our ſpirituall ſacrifices and oblations, our thanks and praiſes for bleſſings and mercies received, and a broken and contrite heart for ſins committed, which ſacrifices God will not refuſe.

Chriſt will alſo execute his propheticall Office in our hearts, to teach and inſtruct us the right way to true holineſſe and godlineſſe of life and converſation, and how to attain unto eternall ſalvation in the life to come. So likewiſe Chriſt will rule and reign in our hearts as King by his Spirit of grace, to order and govern us in all our wayes and actions, to over-rule and ſubdue all the Spirituall enemies of our ſalvation, to protect and

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keep us from all perills and dangers, to provide for us what is needfull for our good, and alſo to comfort us in all our ſorrowes, and in the anguiſh of our ſoule, to keep us out of the power of the devill at the hour of death, and [u] *to give us a crown of righteouſneſſe, which he hath laid up for us at the day of his appearing.* [u] 2 Tim. 4. 8

Here is yet more matter of comfort to be drawn from Chriſt in our Meditations of him, when he doth ſpiritually dwell in our hearts, and that by faith we do injoy his ſacred ſociety: for he doth cloth us with his own Righteouſneſſe for our juſtification, and he doth endow us with the graces of his Spirit for our ſanctification, that through him we may be able to overcome the world, the fleſh, and the devill, and ſo to over-power the corruptions of our nature, that our ſinful luſts, and the evill concupiſcence of our fleſh ſhal not have dominion over us; [x] *and his ſpirit will bear witneſſe with our ſpirits that we are the children of God.* [x] Rom 8. 16

Chriſt will alſo put a ſpirituall light into our underſtanding to diſcern the things of God, which a naturall man cannot do, and to know our own condition, from whence we are fallen, and how to be recovered; he will give us grace upon the ſight and ſenſe of our ſins to be truly humbled for them, to repent and turn to the Lord; for he delighteth to dwell with thoſe that are of a broken and a contrite heart; according as he ſpeaketh by his Prophet: [y] *Thus ſaith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whoſe Name is holy, I dwell in the high and lofty place; with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* [y] Iſaiah 57 15

Chriſt will alſo change the perverſeneneſſe of the will, to put it into a frame of conformity to the will of God, and he will take off the immoderate affections of our hearts from all earthly things, and will raiſe them up to heavenly contemplations, to ſtudy holineſſe of life, to love that which Chriſt loveth, to delight in his

Commandments, and in his Ordinances, and to practiſe with a willing minde all holy duties which he requireth, both to God and to our neighbour, in publick and in private, at home in our families, and to others upon all occaſions.

Then we ſhall find heavenly joy, and ſpirituall conſolation, when we ſet our hearts to Meditate thus on God in Chriſt.

Wherefore the conſideration of theſe great benefits and comforts which we have by Chriſt, ſhould be ſtrong and prevalent motives to us, to prepare our hearts to receive him, to inlarge our affections with holy deſires
[z] Pſal. 24.7 to imbrace him, [z] and to ſet open the gates and doores of our ſouls, that this King of glory may come in and dwell with us for ever.

If we do ſincerely from the heart deſire ſuch a glorious King, and ſuch a bountifull Inhabitant to make his perpetuall abode with us, then we muſt preſſe hard upon him, and importune him earneſtly with our frequent and fervent Prayers to abide and dwell with us.
[a] Gen. 19 2, 3. [a] The two Angels that came to *Sodome* refuſed to tarry all night with *Lot* upon his firſt intreaty; but when he preſſed greatly upon them, they turned in unto him, and entered into his houſe, and he made them a feaſt, and they did eat, and then they preſerved him from the burning.

[b] Revel. 3.20 But behold, [b] Chriſt ſtandeth at the door of our hearts and knocks; if we hear his voice, and open the door, he will come in to us, and will ſup with us, we ſhall ſup with him.

O the happineſſe of that ſoul that doth hear the voice of Chriſt, when he calls, and doth open his heart unto him when he knocks, either by the Miniſtery of his Word, by the motions of his Spirit, by afflictions, troubles, croſſes, or by any other meanes whatſoever.

But if we will intertain Chriſt, we muſt have no corrivall

rivall with him: for God and Mammon, Christ and *Belial* cannot dwell together. Thus saith Christ, [c] *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*: for *no man can serve two masters.* [c] Luk. 16 13

Also, thus saith *Paul*: [d] *What communion hath light with darknesse? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?* [e] *If we love father or mother, son or daughter more then Christ, we are not worthy of him.* [d] 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15 [e] Mat. 10 37.

If the affections of our hearts are carried after the riches, preferments, and pleasures of this world, or after any darling sin; then Christ will not dwell there and we lose the comfortable and blessed Presence of the eternall Son of God, and the fulnesse of all his excellencies and rich endowments, for that which is nothing else but vanity and vexation of spirit.

Wherefore now we may Meditate comfortably on God through Jesus Christ our Saviour: for the terriblenesse of his Majesty is clouded with the vail of his goodnesse, the severity of his justice is sweetened with his mercy and tender compassion,

Christ hath taken our souls out of the hand of Gods justice, and hath put them into the hand of his mercy, where they shall be kept for true blessednesse to all eternity.

If his greatnesse doth affright us, his goodnesse will allure us; if his justice doth drive us from him, his mercy and love will draw us to him: for by Christ we have a neer relation to God himself, either as his servants by grace, or as his children by adoption, in both which respects our Meditations of him will be exceedingly delightfull to us: So likewise if we fix our thoughts upon Christ, though his excellencies and dignities are far above the reach of our humane capacity; yet by faith we do apprehend him to be our Redeemer, and our Advocate now at the right hand of God his Father in the highest heavens; and therefore our Meditations of him cannot but ravish our souls with heavenly joy, and

ſpirituall conſolation, in the aſſurance of our Redemption, and of our Atonement with God, and alſo in the hope of our eternall ſalvation, and to be heirs of the kingdome of heaven, which he hath purchaſed for us with his own blood.

How to Meditate on the Holy Ghoſt.

THe Holy Geoſt is the ſame ſpirituall Eſſence and Being with the Father, and with the Son, coequall and coeternall with them both; but as the Deity is diſtinguiſhed into three Perſons, the holy Ghoſt proceedeth from the Father, and from the Son, and he is the third Perſon in the ſacred Trinity.

Chriſt doth prove that the holy Ghoſt proceedeth
[a] Iohn 15 26 from the Father in theſe words: [a] *But when the comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, he ſhall teſtifie of me.*

That he proceedeth from the Son is manifeſt by this
[b] Gal. 4. 6 of *Paul*: [b] *And becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father.*

John alſo the beloved Diſciple of Chriſt maketh it plain that the holy Ghoſt is the third Perſon in the
[c] 1 Joh. 5. 7 holy Trinity by theſe words: [c] *There are three that bear record in heaven, The Father, the Word, and the holy Ghoſt, and theſe three are One.*

[d] Iſa. 11. 2 The Prophet calls him, [d] *The ſpirit of Wiſdome and underſtanding, the ſpirit of counſel and ſtrength, the ſpirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.*

[e] Heb. 9. 14 [e] He is the eternall ſpirit of God from whom nothing
[f] Pſal. 139 7 can be hidden, according to this of *David*, [f] *Whither ſhall I go from thy Sprit? or whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence?*

[g] Ioh 14. 16, 17. Chriſt calleth him the Spirit of truth: [g] *And I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth,*

whom

whom the world cannot receive. *John* calls him [h] *the Spirit of life*, becauſe by the power of his grace he doth quicken our hearts, and revive us when we are dead in our treſpaſſes and ſins. [h] Rev. 11. 11

Paul doth alſo call him [i] *the Spirit of adoption to witneſſe to our ſpirits that we are the children of God.* [i] Rom. 8. 15, 16.

If we fix our Meditations on the holy Ghoſt, as he is in his Divine Eſſence and Being, or as he is one of the three Perſons in the ſacred Trinity, we ſhall be confounded in theſe deep myſteries of the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity; but if we Meditate upon him according to his proper Office, as he is a Comforter, or according to his ſeverall operations in our hearts, we ſhall then find much comfortable matter for our hearts to Meditate upon, which will miniſter heavenly and ſpirituall conſolation to our poor ſouls.

Firſt, therefore we muſt conſider that the proper Office of the holy Ghoſt is to be a comforter to us in all our afflictions and ſufferings: for we are dayly expoſed to many tribulations and calamities, either for the profeſſion of the Name of Chriſt, for the triall of our graces, or for our correction when we lye in ſin without repentance, which would eaſily ſwallow us up, if we had not ſome true comforter to ſupport and comfort us in them.

[k] There is alſo an hoſt of ſinfull luſts in us that war againſt our ſouls, which do dayly aſſault us with ſtrong temptations, and we are round beſet with perills, dangers and ſpirituall enemies, which continually threaten our downfall and ruine, and do ſeek to hinder our ſalvation. [k] 1 Pet. 2. 11

But above all we are ſometimes wounded in our conſciences with the guilt of ſin, which is a burden heavier than we can bear.

Thus ſaith the wiſe man, [l] *A wounded ſpirit who can bear?* We can have no true comfort in theſe or the like afflictions, but what cometh from the holy Ghoſt, and [l] Prov. 18. 14

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no hope of ſuccour or relief in our diſtreſſes without him, if our ſpirits are wounded, he onely can apply the true Balmof *Gilead* to cure them.

This Balm is the blood of Chriſt, which is an univerſall Remedy to cure all the ſpiritual diſeaſes of our ſouls, and none but the holy Ghoſt can apply it to our hearts by Faith.

Alſo, if the holy Ghoſt doth not refreſh us with the comforts of grace, and with the aſſurance of the love and favour of God, we ſhall be ready to ſink under the great weight of our calamities and miſeries.

But we may draw comfort enough from the holy Ghoſt in what ſad condition ſoever we be: for he will ſweeten the bitterneſſe of all our ſufferings with true peace of conſcience and tranquility of minde, in the aſſurance of the pardon of our ſins; he will ſanctifie all our afflictions and ſorrowes with ſaving grace, that they ſhall be for our good, and will witneſſe to our ſpirits that we are in grace and favour with God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord and Saviour.

Alſo, he will give us ſtrength and courage to ſuffer any thing for Chriſt, and for righteouſneſſe ſake, and likewiſe heavenly wiſedome rightly to uſe every part of the whole armour of God, to defend our ſelves from all our ſpirituall enemies, and to beat back or quench all the fiery darts of the divell, that his temptations and evill ſuggeſtions may not wound our ſouls to the death. Laſtly, he will perfect all with the gift of perſeverance, ſo that we ſhall be able to ſtand faſt in the day of tryall, and we ſhall have aſſured hope of conqueſt and victory in all our conflicts and combates here, and to be crowned with immortall glory hereafter.

Now let this be the deſire of our ſouls, and the Meditation of our hearts to draw comfort from the holy Ghoſt, when we are afflicted, troubled, or any way perplexed with grief of heart, ſorrow of ſpirit, or anguiſh of ſoul, which we may do, if we know that no

outward comforts can ſupport us without God, and therefore we do not reſt and rely upon them; but do ſeek to the true comforter by earneſt and faithfull Prayer in all our neceſſities, which is a ſure means to draw comfort from him when we want it.

Alſo, if we be truly ſenſible that we do want his gracious aſſiſtance to carry us on cheerfully through all the difficulties and dangers that we ſhal meet with in this world, upon our humble ſupplications to him, he will return us a comfortable anſwer, as ſhall be beſt for us.

So likewiſe, if the guilt of our ſins doth ſtick cloſe unto us, or if we poſſeſſe our former iniquities by a ſinfull remembrance of them; ſo that we are truly humbled in the ſight and ſenſe of them, and that our hearts are touched with a godly ſorrow for them; the holy Ghoſt will then come with ſpirituall conſolation to comfort our poor ſouls with an holy aſſurance, that all our ſins are waſht away in the blood of Chriſt by faith.

Laſtly, we may draw comfort from this ſpiritual fountain by our pious and devout Meditations of him: for then he will give us a ſweet taſte of his heavenly graces to comfort us in all conditions of life, and he will give us ſpirituall joy in the midſt of all our afflictions: alſo, he will unite us unto Chriſt by Faith, and will ſeal our Redemption to us by his blood, whereby we ſhall enjoy eternal felicity for ever.

O what ſweet Meditations may we draw from this heavenly Comforter in all the ſadneſſe of our hearts.

Thus we may Meditate on the holy Ghoſt, as he is the true comforter of our ſouls; we come now to conſider of his Divine Operations, from whence we may alſo draw much profitable and comfortable matter for our holy Meditations.

And for our better underſtanding herein, this eternal ſpirit of life is ſet forth in the holy Scriptures by ſeverall reſemblances, to ſhew in what manner, and how variouſly he worketh in our hearts, that our Meditati-

ons may be ordered accordingly.

First, the holy Ghoſt is reſembled to a dove: for when
[m] Mar. 3. 16 Chriſt was baptized, [m] he deſcended in the ſimilitude of a dove, and reſted upon him, which was to ſhew his ſpirituall anointing to his Office of Mediatorſhip, and to ſet forth the true nature of Chriſt, how humble and and meek he was, how innocent and harmleſſe, how loving, and how ready and willing he was to do good to all.

Theſe dove-like qualities were poured upon Chriſt above meaſure, that we his members might receive the ſame in ſome meaſure from him by the holy Ghoſt: for he will put all the faculties of our ſouls, all the affections of our hearts, and all the parts of our bodies into a new frame, he will change the corruptions of our nature into an holy temper; of proud and haughty minded he will make us lowly and meek, of hatefull and malicious he will make us loving and courteous to all, he will ſo ſeaſon us with ſanctifying grace throughout, that our evill diſpoſition ſhall be changed into a gracious condition.

[n] Gen. 8. 11 This ſpirit of truth will bring us an Olive leafe, [n] like *Noahs* dove, to let us know, that though we be in the midſt of troubles, dangers, or diſtreſſes; yet we ſhall be preſerved and delivered, and though we be troubled, diſquieted, or perplexed in our mindes, yet at the laſt we ſhall have peace, tranquillity, ſpirituall joy and comfort

Now by this reſemblance of the holy Ghoſt we may examine our ſelves what purity and holineſſe he hath wrought in us, what meekneſſe of ſpirit, what patience under the croſſe, what love to God and to our neighbour, and how far we are ſanctified in all the affections of our hearts, & in all the parts of our bodies: alſo, how much the corruptions of our nature are weakned in us, and how far we are changed from that which is ſinful to newneſs of life, if we can finde theſe Operations of the holy Ghoſt in us, they

they wil afford us profitable matter for our hearts to meditate upon to the glory of God, and for the comfort of our own ſoules.

Secondly, ſome of the operations of the holy Ghoſt are ſet forth unto us by the reſemblance of that ° pillar of a cloud, which went before the children of *Iſrael* by day, when they marched out of *Egypt*, to guide them the right way that God would have them go toward the Land of *Canaan*. This pillar did alſo protect and defend them from their enemies, it kept the ſcorching heat of the Sun from them, and it cooled and moiſtned the earth with ſweet and comfortable dewes, which was a great refreſhing to the people of God in their march through that hot Countrey. ° Exod. 13 21

We are by nature under the ſpiritual bondage of ſin and Satan, which is far worſe than the Egyptian bondage was to the Iſraelites; and we have no means to be brought out of it, but by an almighty power; and if God doth deliver us, yet we are ſo ignorant of the way to the heavenly *Canaan*, that we cannot ſet one ſtep toward it, except the holy Ghoſt doth put a ſpiritual Light into our underſtanding, to teach and inſtruct us in the right way to heavenly happineſſe.

And becauſe we ſhal meet with many ſpiritual enemies, ſo long as we march thorough the wilderneſſe of this world, the holy Ghoſt will ſo protect and defend us, that they ſhall neither hurt our ſouls by their power, nor keep us out of Canaan by their ſubtilty or malice. He will guide and direct us into all holy duties, he will give us holy deſires and true endeavours to do the will of God, and to walk humbly before him in this preſent world.

Alſo, the holy Ghoſt doth protect us from the heat of Gods wrath, by working faith in us to lay hold upon the merit of Chriſts death for the pardon of our ſins, and by conferring grace for the ſanctification of our lives.

So likewiſe he doth refreſh and comfort our fainting ſpirits with the ſweet dewes of heavenly conſolations, and he doth mollifie and ſoften our obdurate and ſtony hearts with thoſe influences of grace that deſcend from
p Joel 2. 28 him, that we may p be fruitfull in all good works.
Gal. 5. 22, 23. This holy Spirit doth alſo quench the fire of ſin, which otherwiſe would inflame the whole man with ſinful luſts.

And laſtly, the holy Ghoſt doth purge and cleanſe the ſoul from the filth of ſin, as water waſheth away the filth of the body.

q Zech. 36 25. This doth God promiſe by his Prophet, q *I will pour clean water upon you, and you ſhall be clean from all your filthineſſe, and from all your idols will I cleanſe you.*

Wherefore we ought ſeriouſly to ruminate upon theſe operations of the holy Ghoſt: for we cannot find the right way to the heavenly Canaan by all that nature or humane learning can afford us, we cannot overpower our ſpiritual enemies by our own ſtrength, we have no holy deſires, and no ability in our ſelves to any thing that is good, nothing that is in our power can keep us from the wrath of God, and we have nothing that can refreſh and and comfort our afflicted ſpirits.

But here we ſhal find that the holy Ghoſt wil be our guide to this heavenly Country, he wil be our Protector againſt all adverſary power, and he wil be a true comforter to us in all our ſorrowes, and upon all occaſions in all conditions of life.

He will bring us unto Chriſt, and wil firmly unite us
r 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2. unto him by faith: for as the ancient Fathers were all under the cloud, and all paſſed thorough the ſea, and were all baptized unto *Moſes* in the cloud and in the ſea; ſo we are baptized unto Chriſt by the holy Ghoſt, that our ſins may be waſhed away in his blood, and that we may be ſanctified by this ſpirit of grace to live in true holineſſe and righteouſneſſe all our dayes.

If we can thus Meditate on the holy Ghoſt, it wil be

be exceeding profitable and comfortable to our ſouls.

Thirdly, the holy Ghoſt is reſembled to the pillar of fire, that conducted the *Iſraelites* by night out of *Egypt* toward the Land of *Canaan*.

Now we muſt conſider, that ſuch as are the properties of fire, ſuch are ſome of the operations of the holy Ghoſt in our hearts.

Fire is the moſt pure Element, and purifies all other elements, it doth naturally mount upward, it is bright and ſhining, and giveth light to all dark places.

It doth alſo warm and comfort every part of our bodies, and it is the moſt active of all the other elements; it purifies the gold and burnes away the droſſe.

Thus it is with the holy Ghoſt; for he is eſſentially pure in himſelf, and purifies every ſoul from dead works into which he comes, he wil not ſuffer any unclean luſt, or evill concupiſcence to have dominion where he dwelleth, and he wil raiſe up the cogitations of the minde, and the affections of the heart to mount upwards in heavenly contemplations. Alſo, whereas by nature [r] we cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſſe unto us; neither can we know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned: God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit: for the holy Ghoſt wil put a ſpiritual light into our hearts, to diſcern the deep things of God: he wil alſo inflame our affections with an holy zeal to the glory of God, and will make our love fervent to the truth. So likewiſe the holy Ghoſt wil melt our hard and ſtony hearts, and make them tender and gracious, flexible and yielding to every holy duty. And whereas our hearts are naturally bound up in unbelief, and heavy and ſluggiſh to any thing that is good, [t] the holy Ghoſt wil ſo inlarge them that with all cheerfulneſſe of ſpirit, and willingneſſe of minde we ſhall run the way of Gods Commandements.

[r] 1 Cor. 10, 11.

[t] Pſal. 119. 32.

Wherefore now, if we have found any of theſe operations

rations of the holy Ghoſt in our hearts, we ſhal be in ſome meaſure purified and refined from our ſins and pollutions, we ſhall have ſome of the droſſe of our corrupted natu e conſumed, and the heavenly graces of the Spirit of God wil ſhine forth in the integrity of our lives and converſations. Alſo, we ſhall have ſome ſpiritual light to guide our darkned underſtandings in the knowledge of God, and of his wayes, ſome fervency in our Prayers, ſome love to the truth, and ſome holy zeal to the true worſhip and ſervice of God: we ſhal delight in his Law, we ſhal ſtudy to do good works, and it will be the deſire of our hearts, and the comfort of our ſouls to Meditate day and night in the Commandements of God.

If theſe Operations of the holy Ghoſt, which are reſembled to theſe two pillars, cannot eaſily work upon us, if theſe cannot raiſe up our affections to heavenly contemplations; and to be forward and ready to every good duty in the ſervice of God; then ſurely we are exceeding dull and ſtupid, and we have great need to pray earneſtly, that the holy Ghoſt will be pleaſed to come with his unreſiſtible power, and break our hard & ſtony hearts and molifie this extreme obduracy that is in them with his ſuppling grace, that ſo we may more eaſily take the impreſſion of his ſanctifying grace in us.

Conſider further, that theſe two pillars which did lead the Iſraelites out of Egypt, were a viſible ſign of the preſence of God with them, to conduct them in the way to Canaan, to protect and defend them from all their enemies, and to deliver them out of all dangers. And they were in the form of pillars to be a clear evidence to them, that the Lord would not leave them, nor forſake them; but would conſtantly abide with them, until he had brought them paſt all danger, and had delivered them out of all their troubles, and until he had given them reſt from all their enemies. [a] Thus the Angel of the Lord delivered Peter out of priſon, and would not

[a] Act. 12.

leave

leave him untill he had brought him past the first and second ward, and through the iron gate into the city, where he might secure himself from *Herod*, who sought his life.

These pillars were also a witnesse to them of the Covenant and promise which God made to their Fathers, that he would give them the land of Canaan for their inheritance, and that the people should alwayes remember, to the glory of God, their miraculous deliverance out of Egypt, and the wonderfull goodnesse of God to them all the time they travelled through the vast wilderneſse: for they had still a pillar to conduct them, and God would have a memoriall kept of all his wonderfull works. Thus [w] the Lord commanded *Joshua* to take twelve stones out of *Jordan*, and to leave them in the place where they should lodge that night, to be a perpetuall memoriall that the waters of *Jordan* were cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, when it passed over *Jordan*. [w] Josh. 24

In *Nehemiahs* time [x] the Levites in their confession of God's goodnesse, do remember how God brought his people out of Egypt, & led them by those two pillars; & though they did highly provoke God by their molten calfe, yet he forsook them not in the wilderneſse: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, neither the pillar of fire by night. [y] *Lots* wife became a pillar of salt, because against Gods commandement she looked back toward *Sodom*, [z] which great judgement Christ would have to be perpetually remembred. [a] *Jacob* set up a stone for a Pillar, as a memoriall of his integrity to *Laban*, and for a witnesse of the Covenant that was between them. Also, [b] he set a pillar upon *Rachels* grave for a perpetual memorial of her. [c] *Absalom* reared up for himself a pillar in the Kings dale for the perpetuity of his name: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance, and therefore he called the Pillar after his own name. [x] Neh. 9. 12, 19. [y] Gen. 19. 26. [z] Luk. 17. 32 [a] Gen. 31. 45, 52. [b] Gen. 35. 20 [c] 2 Sam. 18. 18.

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If we do well ruminate upon theſe things, and imprint them in our hearts, it will make much for our ſpiritual conſolation: for where the holy Ghoſt doth ſettle his abode, it is to abide there for ever; and if we enjoy his bleſſed preſence, it is the greateſt comfort of our ſouls. He will be as a ſtrong Pillar for us to reſt upon, when we are aſſaulted with ſtrong temptations, or beſet with perills and dangers, or any way viſited with ſorrowes and afflictions: he is alſo ſuch a Pillar of true comfort, as will not leave us in any ſad condition, or miſery, but will ſtill continue with us, untill he hath brought us out of all our troubles, dangers, and diſtreſſes.

This ſimilitude of a Pillar doth ſo ſtrengthen our faith and hope in God, that nothing ſhall be able to overthrow the foundation of it. This is alſo great conſolation to us, that we have the Spirit of truth to bear witneſs to our ſpirits, that we are in the love and favour of God, though the outward man be miſerably afflicted, perplexed and tormented.

This conſideration will appeaſe the clamours of our ſins, and the accuſations of our conſciences; and though we are in our own apprehenſion, as quite forſaken of God, yet we ſhall hereby be preſerved from ſinking under ſo great a preſſure of temptation; and though the devill doth aggravate our ſins to make us caſt off all hope of pardon; yet this bleſſed Spirit will make us look up to Chriſt by faith, as he was upon the croſſe, and we ſhall ſee the guilt of all our ſins nailed to the ſame croſſe, and the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt to be imputed to us, which will fruſtrate the malicious deſigne of the devill againſt the ſalvation of our ſouls.

Here alſo we may find profitable matter for our inſtruction and edification: for it doth teach us to reſt firmly upon the aid and aſſiſtance of this bleſſed Spirit in all conditions of life, and in all the calamities and tribulations that we ſhall meet with in this preſent world.

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It doth also binde us to a thankfull remembrance of all the benefites which we have received from him, of all the heavenly endowments which he hath bestowed upon us, and of all the spirituall graces, which he hath wrought in us, that we may imploy them to the glory of God, and to the good of our own souls; and therefore we ought not to grieve the Holy Ghost, nor quench his gracious motions, but to yield all willing and ready obedience to his good will and pleasure.

This doth also teach us to rest upon the promises of God, both for provision, for succour in time of need, and for the salvation of our souls: for he that hath promised is faithfull and true, and if we wait his appointed time, he will assuredly perform it.

Lastly, we must mark and observe what speciall operations of the holy Ghost we have found in our hearts, either for the illumination of our understandings in heavenly things, or working our perverse wills to the will of God, or sanctifying of our affections to newnesse of life, that we may glorifie God by our thankfulnesse for them.

Fourthly, the holy Ghost is resembled to a seal: for [d] *We are sealed with this holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, untill the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* [d] Eph. 1. 13. 14.

Also, *Paul* saith, [e] that *God hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* Also again he saith, [f] *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* [e] 2 Cor. 1. 21. [f] Eph. 4. 30.

Whatsoever God hath decreed for our preservation and salvation is sealed with this Spirit of Truth, and cannot be reversed; but is more firm, [g] *than the law of the Medes and Persians*: [h] for *the foundation of God standeth sure*, having this seal, *The Lord knoweth them that are his.* In times of common calamities, God will set his seal of preservation upon his own servants, that they shall not be hurt. [i] The Angel that ascended from the [g] Esth. 8. 8. [h] 2 Tim. 2. 19. Rev. 7. 2. 3.

Eaſt, having the ſeal of the living God, cryed with a loud voice to the four Angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the ſea, ſaying, hurt not the earth, neither the ſea, nor the trees, untill we have ſealed the ſervants of our God in their foreheads.

The holy Ghoſt doth alſo ſeal the New Covenant, and all the gracious promiſes of the Goſpel to our hearts by faith: [k] and if we receive his teſtimony, we do ſet to our ſeal that God is true. Why then do we not reſt upon them? why is our faith ſhaken with every guſt of temptation, and with every little trouble that cometh nere us? Are we ſo weak in faith, that every blaſt of affliction ſhall blow us down? Why are we ſo doubtfull of our ſalvation, that we are ready to let go our hold on Chriſt, when we look upon our dayly ſlips and failings that are cauſed by the ſubtility of the devill, by the inchantments of the world, and by the allurements of our carnall luſts? We do not conſider that we are ſealed with the holy Ghoſt unto the day of Redemption.

[k] Joh. 3. 33.

And when we ſuffer afflictions or tribulations, we do not conſider that they ſhal not hurt us: for we have the ſeal of God in our foreheads, and he wil ſanctifie all our ſorrowes for our good: whereas to the wicked they are the beginnings of thoſe eternall torments which they ſhal ſuffer hereafter for ever.

Here we may find ſweet conſolation in all conditions of life: for if we are loath to leave this world, and thoſe poſſeſſions which we do here enjoy, let our hearts and mindes be raiſed up to meditate upon that inheritance, and thoſe poſſeſſions which Chriſt hath purchaſed for us by his blood, which we ſhal enjoy in heaven: for we have the ſeal of the holy Ghoſt for the truth of it, and then we ſhal be willing to leave theſe vain and earthly riches, and we ſhal earneſtly deſire to enjoy thoſe heavenly and durable treaſures which are there laid up for us.

If the foundation of our faith be ſhaken, this ſeal of the holy Ghoſt will ſettle it ſure; The Lord knoweth them that are his. The Covenant of Grace is confirmed to us by this ſeal, and we may faithfully reſt upon it: for all the promiſes of God therein contained ſhall be performed in their ſeaſon. Our ſpirituall enemies, our croſſes and tribulations, and death it ſelf cannot hurt us; becauſe we have this ſeal of the holy Ghoſt: for he will take away the print of the devils ſeal, which by nature is upon our hearts, and wil ſtamp his own image in the room. [l] But thoſe men that have not the ſeal of God in their foreheads, lye open to all the judgements of God, to be tormented as with the torment of a Scorpion, when he ſtriketh a man. [l] Rev. 9.4, 5

Laſtly, the Holy Ghoſt is reſembled to winde, for when he hath any great work to do in us, he will come with power to rectifie our ſtubborn wils, our obdurate hearts, and rebellious affections; he will come like a ruſhing winde, to make us quake and tremble before him, and to beat down all the ſtrong holds of ſin, that our hearts may be prepared to receive him, and that he may freely work his own work in us.

Thus he came upon the Apoſtles [m] with a ſound from heaven, as of a ruſhing mighty winde, and filled all the houſe where they were ſitting; and then he gave them the gift of tongues, to ſpeak the language of every nation whither he ſhould ſend them, and he gave them all ſpirituall graces, and abilities fit for that Office and function whereunto he had called them. [m] Act. 2. 2, 3

Secondlyhe is reſembled to wind, becauſe his Operations are free to himſelf, and he is no way neceſſitated in his workings, for he worketh in every one when and how he pleaſeth.

Thus ſaid Chriſt to *Nicodemus*, [n] *The winde bloweth where it liſteth; and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: ſo is every one that is born of the ſpirit.* [n] John 8. 3.

[o] Gen. 4. Gods election is of free grace, not of works; [o] he had reſpect to *Abell* and to his offering; but he refuſed *Cain* and his offering.

[p] Rom. 9. 11 13, 15, 20. [p] God did chooſe *Jacob*, and rejected *Eſau*, the children being not yet born: for thus ſaith God to *Moſes*, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compaſſion on whom I will have compaſſion.*

We are as clay in the hand of the potter; cannot he make of the ſame lump, one veſſel unto honour and another unto diſhonour? Shall the thing formed ſay unto him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus? Thus ſaith the Lord by his Prophet, [q] *Woe unto him that ſaith unto his Father what begetteſt thou? or to his mother, what haſt thou brought forth?* [r] for we are in Gods hand as the clay is in the potters hand. So likewiſe [s] the holy Ghoſt beſtoweth his gifts diverſly, ſome have one gift, ſome another, ſome have more, and ſome have leſſe; none but Chriſt had a fulneſſe of all gifts, and [t] of his fulneſſe have all we received, and grace for grace.

[q] Iſa. 45. 10 [r] Jer. 18. 6. [s] 1 Cor. 12. [t] John 1. 16

As there is great diverſity in the gifts, [u] ſo there is as great in the operations of the holy Ghoſt, and yet all proceed from the ſame Spirit: for God worketh all in all.

[u] 1 Cor. 12. 6.

Thirdly, the holy Ghoſt is reſembled to winde, becauſe he doth blow away the chaff and vanity of our ſinfull inventions, and idle cogitations, that our mindes may be the better fitted and prepared for heavenly contemplations, and for the worſhip and ſervice of God.

Now to bring all this home in particular to thy ſelf, conſider what comforts and benefites thou doſt enjoy by the holy Ghoſt, both as he is the true comforter, whom Chriſt ſent down from the Father to abide with thee for ever, and alſo by his holy operations according to thoſe ſeverall reſemblances, and then thy meditations of him will be comfortable to thy ſoul.

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He will be a carefull Father to provide for thee, he will be a wall of defence round about thee, he will dull the ſenſe of all thy pains and torments, that thou maieſt the better bear them, as he did to the three children in the fiery furnace, and to ſome of the holy Martyrs in their torments.

Though thy ſufferings are above humane ſtrength; yet he will give thee ſtrength of grace to bear them contentedly: for he will raiſe up thy heart [u] to look to the recompenſe of reward, which God will give thee in heaven of his own free love, bounty and goodneſſe. [u] Heb. 11 20

Alſo, if the croſſe lieth long upon thee, and thou canſt not get it removed by thy earneſt ſupplications; yet thou needeſt not be out of hope: for the heavenly comforts of the holy Ghoſt will never fail thee, but will ſtill bear thee up, againſt all the boyſterous billowes of temptations and ſorrowes.

Though thy whole life be a life of miſery; yet the end ſhall be comfortable to thee, according to this of *David*, [x] *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. But though the wicked are in great power, ſpreading themſelves like a green bay tree; yet they ſhall be deſtroyed together, and their end ſhall be cut off.* [x] Pſ 37. 33, 37, 38.

If we have theſe benefits and comforts, and much more by the operations of the holy Ghoſt, we muſt then ſtudy how to be thankfull to him for his goodneſſe and how to expreſſe it by our conformity to his will, and by our ready obedience to his holy motions. Alſo, we muſt have recourſe unto him by fervent prayer for what we want, as it may ſtand with his good pleaſure to grant.

But we muſt take heed with what heart and with what affections we make our addreſſes unto him: for if there be any ſecret or darling ſin lurking in us, he will eaſily find it out, he can ſearch into the moſt ſecret corners of our hearts, and nothing can be hidden from his

all ſeeing eye. If our hearts are more ſet upon carnall pleaſures or worldly profits, than to meditate on his gracious operations, and how to enjoy him, he will ſoon diſcover our hypocriſie, and it will ſtop the current of his graces to our hearts; but if he findeth truth and ſincerity in our inward parts, he will then plentifully beſtow his heavenly gifts and graces upon us: for he will give us more meekneſſe of ſpirit, more patience in our troubles, more comfort in our ſorrowes, and more grace to cleanſe and purge away the leproſie aud filth of our ſins.

Alſo he will put our hard and ſtony hearts into a gracious condition, fit to receive the print of his own image to ſeal unto us the aſſurance of our ſalvation. No duty then in the ſervice of God can be hard to us, if we are guided by this eternall Spirit, and nothing that we ſuffer can be bitter to our ſouls, if this heavenly comforter hath made his abode in our hearts.

In the laſt place we muſt conſider, that no ſaving and ſanctifying grace can be wrought in us, but by the holy Ghoſt, and we can diſcern nothing of the deep things of God for our comfort, if we have not a ſpirituall light from him: he worketh faith in us to unite us to Chriſt, and to make application to our ſelves of the merit of his ſufferings for our redemption: he works repentance to aſſure us of the pardon of our ſins, and to manifeſt the power of Chriſts death and reſurrection in us, by the mortifying and killing of the power of our ſins, and by the quickening of us up unto newneſſe of life.

The holy Ghoſt worketh our filiall love to God, our hope in his promiſes, our Chriſtian patience in bearing the croſſe with a meek and a contented minde, our Chriſtian fortitude and courage in all our ſpirituall combates and tryalls, and our conſtancy to hold out untill we have obtained victory. He gives us the aſſurance of our juſtification, the ſanctification of our lives, ability to pray unto God, and to meditate on

him

him as we ought, and he worketh the renovation of the whole man in us.

These heavenly graces are as so many precious jewells to adorn our souls, that we may be all glorious within, y like *Solomons* Queen, to be espoused unto Christ: for if we be decked with these ornaments of grace, and cloathed with the righteousnesse of Christ, to cover the shame and the deformity of our sins, then God will accept of our persons, and of our offerings, and will hereafter wed us to his own Son.

y Psal. 45. 13

Wherefore, when we come into the presence of God to partake of his Divine Ordinances, or to perform any holy service unto him, we must humbly crave the assistance of the holy Ghost, to give us understanding hearts and sanctified affections, and to put an holy zeal into our prayers and Meditations, that they may mount up above all earthly things, and ascend up to the throne of grace, where they shall be heard and graciously accepted.

z When *Moses* perceived that God was in a flame of fire in a bush, he trembled and durst not behold, untill he had put off his shoes from his feet; because the place where he stood was holy ground. So likewise, a though *Joshua* was so valiant, as to withstand a man of war, that stood over against him with his sword drawn in his hand; yet when he understood that he was the captain of the host of the Lord, even God himself, he fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and loosed his shoe from off his feet, because the place whereon he stood was holy.

z Acts 7. 30, 32, 33.

a Josh. 5. 13, 14.

Thus we ought to appear before God with fear and trembling, and to come with all due reverence into his Presence when we perform any holy duties unto him, also to put off all our filthinesse, and to put on the righteousnesse of Christ by faith, because we come into an holy place, where God himself is present, who will not suffer any unclean thing to come near unto him.

If we can thus Meditate on the holy Ghoſt, we ſhall find much ſweetneſſe and comfort in our Meditations.

Now let thy heart Meditate freely on this bleſſed Comforter with an holy devotion, and pure affections, when thou art in any ſorrowfull or afflicted condition, or when any anguiſh of ſpirit doth ſeize upon thee: for true conſolation is no where to be found, but onely in him. Let thy heart alſo ruminate upon thoſe ſeverall reſemblances of the holy Ghoſt, which will help thine underſtanding to diſcern how he worketh in thy heart, to purge thee from thy corruptions, to inſtruct thee in the wayes of godlineſſe, to confirm thee in the Truth, to change thy ſinfull diſpoſition into a ſanctified condition, to ſeal the aſſurance of thy Redemption to thy ſoul, to blow away all vain and ſinfull cogitations out of thy minde, and to give thee all ſpirituall abilities meet for a Chriſtian warfare in this life, that thou maiſt have a Crown of righteouſneſſe in the life to come.

How to Meditate upon the Works of God.

IF we conſider and look well upon the works of God, in the Creation of the Heavens and of the Earth, how he hath beautified and adorned the Heavens with innumerable glorious bodies, and repleniſhed the Earth with all varietie of Plants and fruitfull trees, and with all kindes of living Creatures, both great and ſmall; alſo, how he hath filled the bowels of the Earth with rich and precious mineralls, and the ſeas with fiſhes of all kindes: we cannot then but admire the Omnipotent Power, the infinite Wiſedome, the tranſcendent glory, and the wonderfull Goodneſſe of God the great Creatour, who hath made them all for our uſe and ſervice, and that he might be glorified by them.

This

This consideration will help our understandings in the knowledge of God, and to raise up our hearts to Meditate upon his Almighty power, his Divine Wisedome, his glorious Majesty, and his admirable goodnesse to the sons of men. [a] For the invisible things of God, that is, his eternall power and Godhead are seen by the Creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made, to the intent that every man should be without excuse. [a] Rom. 1. 19.

Thus saith the Prophet: [b] *He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdome, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.* [b] Jer. 10. 12.

And thus saith the Psalmist: [c] *He hath shewed his people the power of his Works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen. The works of his hands are verity and judgement.* [d] *O Lord, how manifold are thy Works? in wisdome hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches; so is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.* Also *David* saith thus; [e] *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work.* But if we consider the goodnesse of the Lord in all his Works, we shall finde no end thereof, [f] *He is abundant in goodnesse and truth.* [g] *The earth is full of the goodnesse of the Lord.* [h] *The goodnesse of God endureth continually.* [c] Psal. 111. 6, 7. [d] Psal. 104. 24, 25. [e] Psal. 19. 1. [f] Exod. 34. 6 [g] Psal. 33. 5 [h] Psal. 52. 2

There is no creature, though it be never so contemptible, but it findeth the goodnesse of God, and there is no moment of time, but we have experience of his goodnesse and mercy to us.

Behold and see the beauty and splendor of the Sun, of the Moon, and of all the Starres, admire their glorious bodies, and what lustre they cast down upon the earth, how they rejoice to run their course in their severall orbs, wherein God hath placed them, and yet they do not crosse or hinder each other in their motions; also, how God doth by them measure out time, how he governeth the day by the Sun, and how he ruleth

the night by the Moon and Starres. Conſider alſo, how uſefull and comfortable theſe glorious creatures are to us, and how God divided the year by them into Winter and Summer, Spring-time, and Harveſt, and hath continued theſe ſeverall ſeaſons even to this day, as he Gen. 8. 22 ſaid to *Noah* preſently after the flood. *i While the earth remaineth, ſeed-time and Harveſt, cold and heat, ſummer and winter, and day and night ſhall not ceaſe.*

All theſe do clearly ſet forth the glory of God, the Wiſdome, the Power, and the goodneſſe of the great Creatour.

What ſhall we ſay now to our ſelves? Shall theſe irrationall Creatures keep their appointed ſtations, and ſhall we go aſtray from God? Shall they obey the will of God, and ſhall we rebell againſt him? Shall they run their courſe with joy and delight, according to the will of God, and ſhall we be backward in a Religious and pious courſe of life, contrary to his will? Shall we have no heavenly thoughts, no holy deſires to do the will of God, and no ſincere devotion in the worſhip and ſervice of our God? Oh, let the comfortable preſence of the Sun, and the beauty of the Moon, and the brightneſſe of every Starre move us day and night to raiſe up our thoughts, and to ſet our Meditations upon God their Maker, whoſe Glory doth infinitly ſurpaſſe the brightneſſe of them all, and let us ſtudy to praiſe and magnifie him for his goodneſſe, and for his wonderfull works that he hath wrought for the ſons of men.

If we look upon the birds and fouls of the aire, or upon the beaſts of the field, and conſider how God provided food and rayment, and weapons of defence for them all, how he preſerveth them in their kindes, and what great increaſe they bring forth through his bleſſing we may ſee a glympſe of the glory of God even in them, his care in providing for them, and his great Wiſdome Job 39. in the variety of their kindes. *k* What goodly wings and feathers

feathers hath God given to the Peacock, and to the Oſtrich, what ſtrength to the horſe? what ſwiftneſſe to the Eagle? how terrible is the Leviathan? none is ſo fierce that dare ſtir him up, who then is able to ſtand before God? [m] How hath God cloathed the Lillies? *Solomon* in all his glory was not arraied like one of them.

[l] Job 41. 19.

[m] Luk 12. 27

There is no creature ſo baſe and contemptible in our eyes, but that we may ſee the print of Gods finger upon it, and there is no plant that groweth in the earth, but is full of the goodneſſe of God, and uſefull to man.

The Pſalmiſt telleth us, [n] that both the ſenſeleſſe and ſenſible creatures have a voice to praiſe the goodneſſe of the Lord; how can we then be ſilent?

[n] Pſal. 148.

Conſider the Lark to imitate her: for the higher ſhe mounteth, the more cheerfully ſhe ſingeth; ſo likewiſe the higher we raiſe up our affections toward heaven in ſinging praiſes unto God, the ſweeter will our melody be in his ears. If our ſpirits mount up to heaven in our contemplations upon the Works of God, we cannot but acknowledge to his honour and glory, what excellent Workmanſhip and Wiſdome he hath ſhewed, even in the leaſt of them, and how wonderfull good and gracious he hath been to us; becauſe he hath made them all for our good, that we ſhould glorifie God in the right uſe of them. But if we look upon the Creatures with a ſuperficiall eye, and if we have the dayly uſe and ſervice of them, and can finde no matter to ruminate upon for the glory of God, [o] then the Lord hath not given us an heart to perceive, and eyes to ſee, and ears to hear what great things God hath done for us, and what bleſſings he hath beſtowed upon us to this day.

[o] Deu. 29.

Conſider further, how plentifully God hath provided for man; he hath given him ſome creatures for nutriment, ſome for cloathing, others for ornament: ſome are for his delight and lawful pleaſure, and others are for

[r] Luk. 12.22 his neceſſary occaſions: ſo likewiſe [r] God doth feed the fowles of the aire, and every living creature, and he doth cloath the very graſſe of the field.

[s] Job 38.41 Thus ſaith the Lord unto *Job*, [s] *Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.*

This was to ſtrengthen *Jobs* confidence in God, for though he were now brought down from greateſt plenty to the greateſt want and penury, from the higheſt honour to the loweſt degree of ignominy and reproach; yet God had ſtill a care of him, and was all-ſufficient to raiſe him up again to honour, and to provide what was needfull for him. Alſo, though he were now in the furnace of affliction, and upon the teſt for the tryall of his patience, yet God would bring him out of all his afflictions, and reſtore him again to joy and gladneſſe of heart.

Why then do we take ſo much thought for food and rayment? why do we cark and care for the things of this life? why are we ſo caſt down, if we want them? why are we ſo diſquieted, if trouble ſickneſſe or ſorrow preſſe heavy upon us? is not the life more than meat, and the body more than rayment? hath not Chriſt had experience of theſe wants, and of the croſſe, and and hath not he ſanctified them to us?

[t] Luk. 12.29 30. This is the counſel of our Saviour Chriſt, [t] That we ſhould not be of doubtfull minde, to ſeek after earthly things with too much greedineſſe, becauſe our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of them. Holy *David* doth thus parly with his own ſoul, when he was in

[u] Pſal. 43.5 a ſad condition: [u] *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me?* then he doth thus comfort him ſelf; *Hope in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.* For he will provide for us, he will ſweetly comfort us in our neceſſities, and will put a bleſſed end to all our ſorrows and tryalls.

But

But to look a little more about the Works of God: if we conſider the wonders that are in the ſea, where the great Leviathan doth ſport himſelf; and the coſtly and precious mineralls that are in the earth, which God hath created for the uſe of man; we ſhall ſee Gods ſtamp upon every creatnre, which giveth us juſt occaſion to imploy our pious thoughts, and the affections of our hearts in the Meditation of his wonderfull works, and how to praiſe him for his goodneſſe, and cheerfully to ſerve him in true thankfulneſſe for all his benefits to us.

We muſt not therfore be more ignorant and dul of underſtanding than the beaſts; we muſt not be like the Jewes, of whom God complaineth thus by his Prophet. [t] *The ox knoweth his owner, and the aſſe his makers crib: but Iſrael doth not know, my people doth not conſider.* [t] Iſa. 1. 3.

Wherefore let our hearts be now enlarged in the contemplation of the Works of God, that we may Meditate his praiſe and glory for the comfort of our ſouls. How can we forget God, ſeeing his Works are alwayes before our eyes, and ſeeing he doth dayly feed us and cloath us with his good creatures? and how can we neglect our praiſes and thankſgivings unto him, when we lye down at night, and when we riſe up in the morning ſeeing he hath created both the day and the night for uſe and comfort?

Though God hath given us the uſe of all his creatures here below, and power to diſpoſe of them at our own pleaſure, ſo that it be for his glory; yet we know not how long we ſhall enjoy them: for God onely is the diſpoſer of time, to give more or leſſe as he pleaſeth; for as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, [u] *The day is his, the night alſo is his: he hath prepared the light and the Sun.* [u] Pſal. 74. 16

God hath given us no more time but the very moment that is preſent; for if it be paſt, we cannot recall it; if it be not yet come, we know not whether we ſhall enjoy it, when one moment is paſt, it is at Gods pleaſure to give us another.

Wherefore every day and every night that we enjoy from God, ſhould be ſpent to that end, for which God hath ordained them, which is, that his holy worſhip and ſervice be principally regarded, that our lawfull calling be carefully followed in their due ſeaſons, which we may take for the glory of God, either by our Meditations in his Word, or on his Works, or by ſome pious duties, as God ſhall give us fit opportunity. For God did not create the day for works of ſin and wickedneſſe; but for Works of piety and holineſſe: neither did he give us the uſe of the day to ſpend it vainly, idly, or unprofitably; but to be ſpent about that which doth conduce to his honour and glory, and to the good of our own ſouls.

Alſo, God did not create the night to be ſpent in works of darkneſſe, neither did he give us the uſe of the night for luxurious pleaſures; but to weep and mourn for our ſins, [u] as *David* did, and for holy Meditations; alſo, to refreſh our bodies and ſpirits when they are wearied with the labours of the day before, to make us the more fit for the duties following.

[u] Pſal. 6.

If we thus ſpend our time, it will keep us from ſin in the day, and from uncleanneſſe in the night. Thus God doth teach us highly to prize our time, and to improve it to the beſt advantage of his honour, [x] and to the working out of our own ſalvation with fear and trembling. So likewiſe, [y] we ought to redeem the time that we have loſt; becauſe the dayes are evill; and that muſt be by doubling our future obedience to Gods Commandements.

[x] Phil. 2. 12

[y] Eph. 5. 16.

Thus we may enrich our ſouls in the knowledge of God, if we do devoutly Meditate on him, and upon the creatures which he hath made.

We have ſhewed in generall, how God provideth what is fitting for all living creatures, we come now to ſhew ſome ſpeciall works of Divine Providence to the Saints and Servants of God, when they are brought in-

to ſuch ſtraits, that they know not what to do, nor which way to turn themſelves for ſafety. If we have means to eſcape the danger, or to be delivered out of it, and we do neglect it; we have then no ground to hope for ſafety, or deliverance by the Providence of God, becauſe we bring our ſelves into the danger: but if we have no means to eſcape, and no way to be delivered out of any dangerous ſtrait, we may then caſt our ſelves upon the Providence of God, and he will make a way for us to eſcape; becauſe he hath brought us into this ſtrait, to manifeſt his own work of Providence for his own glory, and for our ſafety.

[z] Thus he brought *Abraham* into a great ſtrait, when he did expreſly command him to offer his onely ſon *Iſaac*, whom he loved, for a burnt offering. *Abraham* muſt now either violate his faith and obedience to God, or elſe he muſt ſlay his own dear ſon, who was the heir of the promiſe: but *Abraham* caſt himſelf upon the Providence of God, and would not diſobey his command: then God ſhewed him a Ram, which he took and offered up for a burut offering in the ſtead of his Son. [z] Gen. 22.

God did likewiſe bring the children of *Iſrael* into a terrible ſtrait, when they marched out of *Egypt*; for they could turn no way from apparent danger of deſtruction: the red ſea was before them, their enemies were behinde them, and mountains were on each ſide, ſo that there was no way or means to eſcape, [a] then they were ſore afraid, and cryed out to the Lord. *And Moſes ſaid unto the people, Fear ye not, ſtand ſtill, and ſee the ſalvation of the Lord, which he will ſhew to you to day.* Then the Lord made a way for them through the ſea, and ſaved them from their enemies: but the ſea drowned all the hoſt of the *Egyptians* that purſued after them. [a] Exod. 14. 10.

The Prophet *Gad* came to *David* and told him the Word of the Lord, [b] *Shall ſeven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three moneths before*

them

thine enemies, while they purſue thee? or that there be three dayes peſtilence in thy land? This put *David* into a great ſtrait; but he caſt himſelf upon the mercies of God, and did chooſe to fall into the hand of the Lord, and not into the hand of man; for he knew that his mercies were great. [c] *Paul* was in the like ſtrait, for he knew not whether to chooſe to live, which was more needfull to the *Philippians*, or to dye, which was far better for himſelf.

[c] Phil. 1. 23, 24.

Sometimes God ſuffers the devill and wicked men to lay their traps to enſnare his own ſervants, if he ſeeth them ſecure and careleſſe of their wayes, and though they do maliciouſly intend and purpoſe their hurt and deſtruction; yet God, by his wiſe providence, will make a way for them to eſcape the danger of them all, that he may magnifie his own glory thereby. Sometimes alſo, God doth ſuffer his ſervants to be pinched with want and ſcarcity, to be long under afflictions and under the croſſe, and for ſome ends beſt known to his Divine wiſdome, he doth long defer to manifeſt his Providence to them for their ſuccour and comfort; which is a very great tryall of their faith, hope and dependence upon God; and many of Gods dear children have complained that he did not help and relieve them, and that he ſuffered his enemies ſo long to triumph over them.

1 Cor. 10. 10, 13.

Thus ſaith the Pſalmiſt, [e] *Lord, how long ſhall the wicked, how long ſhall the wicked triumph?* Thus *David* complaineth, [f] *I will ſay unto God my rock, Why haſt thou forſaken me? Why go I mourning becauſe of the oppreſſion of the enemy?* Alſo, thus *Aſaph* complained when he was in great diſtreſſe: [g] *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? And will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promiſe fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* And then he doth confeſſe that it was his infirmity to queſtion the good Providence of God.

[e] Pſal. 94. 3.
[f] Pſal. 42. 9.
[g] Pſal. 77. 7, 8, 9, 10.

But

But ſome do repine and murmur againſt God, and againſt his wiſe Providence through unbelief, if they have not their wants & neceſſities ſupplied at their pleaſure, and if they have not deliverance out of their troubles and tribulations when they expect it. Theſe are ready to ſay with *Jeboram*, that wicked king, [h] *Behold, this evill is of the Lord, what ſhould I wait on him any longer?* [h] 2 Kin. 6. 33.

Holy *David* doth expreſſe in diverſe of his Pſalmes, how he waited for the Lord from day to day, how he reſted on the Lord, and how patiently his ſoul waited for him

If we thus wait upon God, [i] then the Lord will wait that he may be gracious unto us, and therefore we ought to wait for him. But if our Faith in God can reach no further, than humane ſenſe or reaſon can carry it, we diſhonour God by our unbelief, , though we have formerly had great experience of his good Providence to us, and we ſhall provoke him to wrath as the *Iſraelites* did in the wilderneſſe, when they ſaid, [k] *Can God furniſh a Table in the wilderneſſe? Behold, he ſmote the rock, that the waters guſhed out, and the ſtreams overflowed, can he give bread alſo? can he provide fleſh for his people?* Thus they believed not in God, and reſted not upon his Providence, though they had ſeen ſo many of his great wonders, which he had wrought for them. [i] Iſa. 30. 18. [k] Pſal. 78. 19, 20.

Wherefore now, let this be the deſire of our hearts, and ſouls, [l] *that our faith may be rooted and grounded in the love of God to us in Chriſt, who with him hath given us all things.* [l] Eph. 3. 17

The glorious creatures in heaven are comfortable to us by our intereſt in Chriſt, and all creatures here below are for our uſe, and at our command, and ſervice, becauſe we have right to them by faith in Chriſt, without which we can have no comfort in them, and no aſſurance that they belong unto us. If our faith be well rooted, it will then be fruitfull in all good works, and it will never decay, becauſe it doth ſpring from a Divine

Principle, and is continually watered with a ſpirituall dew from heaven. Alſo, there is great need that it be well grounded and built upon a ſure rock, becauſe we ſhall meet with ſtrong aſſaults and temptations, which like boyſterous windes and billowes, will ſeek to overturn it, and we cannot comfortably injoy the good creatures of God, if we do not injoy them in Chriſt our Saviour, which muſt be onely by faith in him.

God himſelf will ſometimes try our faith, to the utmoſt by afflictions and croſſes, by ſuffering our enemies and wicked men to vex our very ſouls, or by withdrawing his aſſiſting grace from us, by clouding the light of his countenance, or by deferring the manifeſtation of his Divine Providence, when we are in any ſtrait, or in any neceſſity, which we could not ſhun, and cannot tell which way to turn our ſelves, becauſe we have no means of help, comfort, and ſalvation, but onely to caſt our ſelves upon the Providence of God, which we cannot comfortably do, if our faith be not well grounded in Chriſt the rock of our ſalvation. For if it be grounded upon any ſandy foundation, as upon our naturall endowments, upon common grace, or upon any earthly thing, it will fall at every guſt of temptation, at every wave of affliction, and it will not endure the fiery tryall; it doth reſt more upon the arm of fleſh than it doth upon God, and it ſeeks rather to ſecondary means for help and ſuccour, than it doth unto God, and in the end it will deceive us.

In the laſt place God is wonderfull in his works of juſtice, and in his Works of mercy, both to the juſt and and to the unjuſt; but in a farre differing manner to them both, and to a farre differing end. For God will not ſuffer ſin to be unpuniſhed, whereſoever he findeth it: If his own children offend, he will chaſtiſe them with a fatherly correction in much love and tender compaſſion, and to bring them to better obedience; but his loving kindneſſe he will not take from them, according

as

as he ſaid to *David*, [m] *If thy ſon commit iniquity, I will chaſtiſe him with the rod of men, and with the ſtripes of the children of men: but my mercy ſhall not depart away from him.* But God puniſheth the ſins of the wicked in anger, and with much ſeverity for their deſtruction: his own children are reformed by their corrections, but the wicked are more hardned in their ſins by their puniſhments. This of the Prophet is verified in them: [n] *O Lord, thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive correction, they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refuſed to return.*

[m] 2 Sam. 7. 14, 15.

[n] Jer. 5. 3.

God doth alſo beſtow his mercies and bleſſings upon them both; he doth commonly give more of his temporall bleſſings to the wicked than he doth to the godly; to leave them without excuſe, and to give them means and ability to glorifie God, but they abuſe them to ſin and uncleanneſſe, to exceſſe and riot. [o] This is that evill which the Preacher did ſee under the ſun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

[o] Eccl. 5. 13.

But God hath ſpeciall gifts and bleſſings which he beſtoweth onely upon the godly, and theſe are the ſaving and ſanctifying graces of his Spirit, which are peculiar onely to them, and reſerved for them.

Wherefore now, if we ſeriouſly ruminate upon the Works of God, we ſhall finde much matter for our inſtruction, and for our ſpirituall conſolation. The knowledge of the creature, is a ready way to bring us to the knowledge of the Creator, and the due obſervation of the Works of God will bring us to the love of him, to the fear and dread of him, and to the obedience of his commands. We have dayly experience of the Works of Gods Providence, and of his goodneſſe to us in Chriſt, which ſhould ſtrengthen our faith, hope and confidence in him, though he doth ſometimes bring us into great ſtraits, and layeth great tryalls upon us;

and it ſhould keep us from murmuring and repining, though he doth long delay to ſend us help and comfort in time of need. Alſo it ſhould keep us from carking care, and from immoderate ſeeking of earthly things, becauſe God will provide for us, and will not ſuffer us to lack any thing that is good. We ſhould therefore wait upon him, and wait patiently for his ſalvation, in all our wants and neceſſities, in all our troubles and tribulations, and in all ſtraits and diſtreſſes, which the malice of the devill or wicked men can bring upon us, for God can and will by his wiſe Providence turn that to our good, which they intend and purpoſe for our hurt. How ſhould we then delight to meditate on God in all his Works? ſeing [p] *the Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works?* What comfort can we want in the ſaddeſt times, ſeeing God watcheth over us by his Divine Providence for our good? what need we fear the malice or power of our ſpirituall enemies, ſeing we have Gods Protection to keep and defend us from them? If we lay up theſe things in our hearts, our ſouls will have the comfort of them in all the ſadneſſe and ſorrowes that we ſhall meet with in this life.

[p] Pſal. 145. 17.

Concerning the Creation of Man.

NOw we come to the Principall piece of Gods Workmanſhip, which he wrought here upon earth, and that is the Creation of man; in which great Work the three perſons in the ſacred Trinity did agree with one conſent, and gave him ſuch a body as ſhould be capable of immortality, and ſuch a ſoul as ſhould receive the impreſſion of the image of God: for thus ſaith the Lord, [q] *Let us make man in our image, after our likeneſſe.* Man muſt needs then be created in innocency, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, without ſpot and blemiſh, or any imperfection, either in his ſoul or body. There was

[q] Gen. 1. 26.

no

no perverſnes in his wil, no folly in his underſtanding, & no corruption in his heart: for God gave him ability, and a willing minde to obey him, and a wiſe and an underſtanding heart, able rightly to know God his Creator, and to worſhip and ſerve him as he ought to be ſerved. Alſo he did know the nature of all the beaſts in the field, of all the fowles in the air, and the vertue of all herbs and Plants; and God made him preſently fit for that rule, and ſoveraignty which he gave him over the creatures. God did alſo ſet his love upon him, and crowned him with glory and honour, according to the words of the Prophet *David*: [b] *What is man that thou art mindfull of him? or the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him? For thou haſt made him a little lower than the Angels, and haſt crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madeſt him to have dominion over the work of thy hands, thou haſt put all things under his feet*: For he was created in his full perfection, fit to rule and govern the creatures, whom God had made for his uſe, and ſervice. [b] Pſal. 8. 4, 5, 6.

As God did ſhew his wonderfull wiſedome and power in the creation of Man; becauſe he made him ſuch an excellent creature of the duſt of the earth; ſo he now ſheweth no leſſe power and wiſdome in faſhioning him in the womb: for thus ſaith holy *David*: [c] *I will praiſe thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, marvelous are thy Works, and that my ſoul knoweth right well: my ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the earth.* The Preacher alſo ſaith, [d] *That we know not how the bones do grow in the wombe of her that is with child.* There are more wonders in man, than there are parts and members of his body, and every one of them calls for due conſideration. The eye is but a little member, and yet the beſt oculiſt cannot finde out all the wonders that are contained in it. [c] Pſal. 139. 14, 15. [d] Eccl. 11. 5.

Who can diſcover the windings and turnings of the brain? how it worketh upon whatſoever it apprehend-

eth? It is troubled with viſions and dreams in the night: it is at no quiet all the day, man hath no command over his own thoughts, but they flie ſwiftly from the Eaſt to the Weſt, and they bring back to remembrance things that were long paſt and gone. So likewiſe there are ſuch ſecret corners in the heart, that no man is able to diſcover what is hidden there: God only that formed it knoweth the breadth and deepth of it, his all-ſeeing eye can ſearch into it, and nothing that lurketh there can be hid from him.

Who can declare the wiſedome of God in the Creation of man? in the faculties and endowments of his ſoul? in the ſtructure of his body? and how he is faſhioned in the womb? we may admire at theſe things, but we cannot comprehend them. Now let us bring down our thoughts and cogitations to ruminate upon our ſelves, & to conſider what our condition was in our firſt creation: ſurely we were in *Adams* loyns when he was in his happy condition, and we did partake with him in the perfection of his holineſſe; he had the Law of God imprinted in his heart, ſo had we; he was able to keep it, ſo were we; the image of God was ſtampt upon his ſoul, ſo it was upon ours: All which doth afford us plenty of matter for our holy Meditations, how to glorifie our good God & great Creator, with all our ſtrength and with all our might, both of ſoul and body, and how to expreſſe our thankfulneſſe to him by our continuall care to obey his will, and to walk before him in holineſſe and righteouſneſſe all our dayes.

Wherefore now, beloved in Chriſt, let me thus expoſtulate with thee; Hath God made thee a man, whereas he might have made thee a brute beaſt, or a worm? for thou wert in his hands, as the clay in the hand of the Potter, to be made a veſſell unto honour or unto diſhonour as his pleaſure. Hath God given thee a reaſonable and immortall ſoul, whereas he might have given thee the ſoul of a beaſt, which is mortall and periſheth

Iſa. 64. 8. Rom. 9. 21.

perisheth with the body? hath he filled thy soul with knowledge and with all heavenly gifts and graces? whereas he might have made it empty and void of understanding, and uncapable of instruction: then let God be thy God, and honour thou him, let him be thy Lord, and serve and reverence him in sincerity of heart, and in truth.

Hath God given thee dominion over all the creatures here below, to rule and govern them at thy will and pleasure? why then canst thou not govern thy self, to keep upright and straight in the wayes of God? why dost thou not rule thine own passions, but sufferest them to break out into rage and fury upon every slight occasion? why art thou carried with a full stream, and with an unbridled liberty to carnall lusts and sensuality? Doth every creature serve and obey thee, and wilt not thou serve thy God, who made them serviceable and obedient to thee? do not they teach thee by their obedience to thy will, that thou shouldst do the will and Commands of thy God? ¶ The Lord would have his people to learn obedience of the *Rechabites*. Jer. 35. The wise man sendeth the sluggard to the Ant to learn wisedome of her. § *Go to the Ant, thou sluggard, consider her wayes, and be wise, which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,* Prov. 6. 6, 7, 8. *provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.* Thou dost look for obedience of thy hyred servant, and wilt thou perform none unto God, to whom thou art bound in a far stronger bond? canst thou work thy head and thy heart about thy worldly affairs, and canst find no thoughts for heaven, no time and no matter to Meditate upon, for the glory of God, and for the comfort of thy soul?

Oh, let such grosse stupidity be far from thee, learn of the very creatures to obey God with more willingnesse of minde, and to be more zealous for his glory. Thou wert created in perfect holinesse and righteousnesse; study therefore and labour for purity of life and conversation, and do not stain and defile that which God would

would have to be kept holy and unblameable in his ſight.

Let the thoughts of thy minde and the Meditations of thy heart be thus imployed about thy creation, and about the wonderfull goodneſſe of God to thee, that thine affections may be ſtirred up with an holy zeal to the conſtant practice of pious and religious duties for the honour of God. If we thus look upon our ſelves, we cannot want matter to magnifie the wiſdom & goodneſs of God, neither can we be ſo fruitleſſe & unprofitable in his ſervice, as naturally we are: for the grace of God, that is in us will conſtrain us, to better obedience.

To what end and purpoſe man was Created.

IF we ſee a fair and ſtately Building, we will commend the Builder, and preſently conclude that he built it for his own habitation, or for ſome honourable uſe and ſervice. If we look upon our ſelves, we ſhall ſee an admirable fabrick of body, which is richly beautified and adorned, both within and without, and we cannot but magnifie our Omnipotent Creator, and preſently conclude, that ſurely God did make us ſuch excellent creatures, and did inrich us with ſuch ſpirituall gifts and graces for ſome ſpeciall end and purpoſe. We were not made by our ſelves, we had no being nor beginning from our ſelves; there was nothing in us to move toward our creation, & therefore we were not created for our ſelves, to follow our own pleaſures, to ſerve our own luſts, or to walk according to our own inventions. It is a vain thing to imagine that we are bound to nothing, or ſhall be accountable for nothing that we do in this life; but that [a] we are born like a wilde aſſes colt in the wilderneſſe, that hath no maſter to tame him. Let ſuch great folly and impiety be far from us: for we were not born to live as we [b] liſt, as if none ſhould con-

[a] Job. 11. 12

[b] Mal. 1. 2, 4.

controll us, and as if there were no Lord over us; but [a] God ſhall bring us unto judgement for all things whatſoever we do; [d] and we ſhall give account in the day of judgement of every idle word that we ſhal ſpeak. How carefull then ought we to be ſo to live, as not to diſhonour God in any thing? and how watchfull ſhould we be over all our wayes, becauſe we muſt give ſuch a ſtrict account unto God at the laſt day?

[a] Eccl. 11.9

[d] Mat. 12.36

If then we demand of our ſelves, between God and our own conſciences, wherefore and to what end we were made, and ſent hither into this world, what to do, and wherein to beſtow our time; then our hearts will tell us, that it was for no other cauſe or end, but to ſerve God with pure affections in righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe all the dayes of our life, and after that ſervice to enjoy eternal bleſſednesſe in the life to come; alſo, to uſe thoſe creatures which God hath given us, that he may be honoured and glorified thereby. Wherefore in whatſoever we beſtow our time, if it be not conducing and profitable to this end and purpoſe, it is vanity and loſt labour, it will give us no eaſe or relief in our ſorrowes, and it will bring no comfort to our ſouls. Likewiſe if we are immoderate in our deſires after earthly things, though they are in themſelves lawfull and good, and if we covet more riches, honour and worldly preferments, or any thing elſe, than ſhall be beſt to inable us in the true religious ſervice of God, and to further the ſalvation of our ſouls, we are then out of the right way, and we run from the true end for which we were created.

Now we may take a view of our own condition, and we may ſee in what ſtate we ſtand with our God: For if if we do principally attend to the true end of our Creation, that our ſtudies, endeavours and all our actions are chiefly bent for the glory of God, and that we can truly ſay with good *Hezekiah*, [e] *I have walked before the Lord in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which*

[e] 2 Kin. 20.3

[f] Pſal. 26. 3 *is good in his ſight*: or as holy *David ſaid*, [f] *Judge me O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity; I have walked in thy truth.* Alſo, if we can truly ſay, [g] That our whole courſe of life hath tended to the working out of our ſalvation with carefulneſſe, fear and trembling, then we are moſt happy, we ſteer our courſe to the right end, and we ſhall at length attain to that Kingdom of eternall glory, which we deſire and hope for. But if upon a diligent ſearch, we finde our ſelves to be in a contrary courſe, to ſit with vain and prophane perſons, to have fellowſhip with hypocrites, and diſſemblers, to love the ſociety of evil doers, and to delight in earthly vanities, all which will eaſily corrupt us by their evill example and ſinfull wayes; then the courſe of our life is not tending to the glory of God, but it is diſhonourable to him, and deſtructive to our own ſouls. Thus we are brought into a perillous and dangerous way that leadeth directly into perdition, if God in mercy doth not bring us into the right way.

[g] Phil. 2. 12

Wherefore it doth greatly concern us to raiſe up our [h] Iſa. 51. 1 thoughts to God our Creator, to fix the Meditations of our hearts upon him, [h] *to look unto the rock whence we are hewen, and to the hole of the pit whence we are digged*, to look unto *Adam* our firſt parent, as he was in the ſtate of innocency, before his fall, that we may labour for his purity, that we may follow after his righteouſneſſe, and ſeek the Lord with pure affections, and ſtudy how to ſerve and pleaſe him in all things, as *Adam* was then able to do. Alſo it behoveth us to conſider how dangerous it is to conform our ſelves to the common errour of the world, that man was born to be for himſelf, and for his ownn ends, which errour we muſt carefully avoid, and then we ſhall labour to ſteer our courſe the right way, and we ſhall beſtow our time to the right end; [i] Firſt, to ſeek the Kingdome of heaven and the righteouſneſſe thereof, and then thoſe things, that ſhall be needfull for this preſent life, ſhall be added unto us.

[i] Mat. 6. 33

Con-

Concerning the fall of man.

MAn had power and ability given him to ſtand and continue in that perfect and bleſſed condition, wherein he was created; but he did ſoon fall from God by tranſgreſſing his command in eating the forbidden fruit, whereby he brought himſelf and all his poſterity, that were then in his loyns, and came out from him by naturall propagation, under the ſevere curſe that God laid upon him for his ſin; and this was the Originall of ſin to all his poſterity.

By this meanes *Adam* defaced the bright image of God that was ſtamped upon his ſoul: for he loſt the perfection of his underſtanding, the liberty of his will and the integrity of his heart. Alſo the earth was curſed for his ſake, and the creatures became rebellious to him: he is now a ſlave to the devill, and to his own ſinfull luſts, and he hath no power to redeem himſelf out of that captivity and bondage, onely he hath a poſſibility by Chriſt to be reſtored again to his former happineſſe; whereas the Angels that kept not their firſt Station, but ſinned againſt God, and were thruſt out of heaven, have no poſſibility to be again reſtored. *Adam* alſo hath made himſelf and all his poſterity lyable to all outward croſſes and ſorrowes of body, goods and good name, to all inward troubles of minde, and anguiſh of ſpirit, to all temporall plagues and puniſhments, and to all eternall pains and torments.

This was our condition in him, we did alſo fall from God with him, and our loſſe hereby is as great as his was, our miſery as much as his, he did eat of the forbidden fruit, and our teeth are ſet on edge; ſo that now we have great cauſe [a] to turn our faces toward the wall with good *Hezekiah*, and to weep with great weeping,

[a] Iſa. 38. 2, 3.

to be ashamed of our selves, and to be confounded in our selves: for the sentence of eternall death is pronounced against us, and we are now under the curse of the Law, and under the fierce wrath and fury of an omnipotent Judge, because we have sinned against God our Maker; [b] we may now hang up our harpsons the willowes, for we can sing no more the joyfull songs of Zion; we are cast out of paradise, and out of the favour of God, and we are now captives in a strange land, under the tyranny of the devill. We have not now that sweet familiarity with God, which we had in the loynes of *Adam* before his fall, we cannot now injoy the light of his countenance, nor look upon him with comfort: for all the beauty of our first holinesse is stained, and polluted with sin and uncleanesse, the pure image of God is defaced in us, we have no knowledge in heavenly things, no holy zeal in our hearts, no purity in our affections, and no readinesse of will to obey God.

[b] Psal. 137. 3.

We have lost all those precious Ornaments of grace, of righteousnes and true holines, of heavenly wisdom, understanding and fear of God, which made us lovely in his sight; and now we are wholely naked, [c] like a wretched infant that cannot help it self, and we are void of all goodnes, and of all help and comfort in our selves.

[c] Ezek. 16.

If we look further into our condition, we shall see how we are plunged into the depth of all misery: for we are now slaves to every vanity, and to every base sinfull lust, and our servitude and bondage under them is very miserable, because they tyrannize over our souls, and yet we do willingly submit unto it, which make us not able to break those chains of sin, wherewith we are bound. We have lost our right to the creatures, and our dominion and soveraignity over them: the earth will yeeld us no increase without excessive labour and toyl, we ly open continually to all our spirituall enemies,

mies, to all kinde of perills and dangers, to all sorrows and miseries in this life, and to eternall burnings in the life to come. Whatsoever we want in spirituall or temporall blessings, and whatsoever we suffer by outward afflictions, or inward troubles of minde, is the fruit of sin, and should make us call to minde, and with much grief and sadnesse of heart to think upon our fall in *Adam*, and how rebellionsly we have sinned against God in the whole course of our lives.

If this be our condition, which is most true, as we are in the State of nature; what comfort can we then take in all worldly pomp and dignities? what contentment is there in all earthly pleasures and delight? they are all nothing else but vanity and vexation of spirit. We may injoy more of this world than our hearts can desire, and yet our soules may starve for want of spiritual food and comfort.

[d] *Cain* was heir apparent to the whole world, and yet he was driven out from the presence of God, and became a vagabond upon earth. So we may injoy whatsoever the world can afford us, and yet God will not look upon us with a gracious aspect, and then our condition will be no better than that of *Cain*. We may injoy health, wealth, peace, liberty, and all manner of prosperity, and yet our souls may be sick, they may languish with sadnesse of heart, they may be much perplexed, and shut up as it were in a dungeon, because they are so restrained by the corruptions of our nature that they have no freedome to mount upwards towards heaven. [d] Gen. 4. 12.

It is nothing so uncomfortable to live in perpetuall darknesse, and never to see the light of the Sun; as it is to have our understandings spiritually darkened, and to live without the light of the [e] Sun of righteousnesse to have no appearance from him, to open the eyes of our understandings, to be a guide to our reason, to season our hearts with grace, and to shew us the way that will [e] Mal. 4. 2.

bring us to heavenly happineſſe. This is our condition by nature, we are out of the favour of God, our life is void of all true comfort and conſolation, we walk in darkneſſe, f we go aſtray like ſilly ſheep, and follow our own inventions, and we have no ability in our ſelves to return again into the right way.

f Iſa. 53. 6

Wherefore let our hearts be throughly affected with this our ſad condition, let our Meditations hereupon draw us to a godly ſorrow for our ſins, which may bring us to true repentance and newneſſe of life: let this be our chief care, and the deſire of our ſoules, to regain the grace and favour of God, and to be reconciled unto him. Let our ſouls bewail our ſins with hearty contrition and true compunction: let our teares manifeſt the grief of our hearts, and the truth of our repentance for our tranſgreſſions, and let us caſt our ſelves down at Gods footſtool, and humbly acknowledge our offences to him, ſuing earneſtly to God by prayer for the pardon and forgiveneſſe of them through Faith in Chriſt. Alſo, we ought to be humble petitioners to God for a ſupply of ſuch graces as we want to ſtrengthen us againſt the corruptions of our nature, and againſt all the enemies of our ſalvation.

This ſhould be our conſtant practiſe every night before we ſleep, to make our peace with God for the ſins of the day paſt, wherein we have failed of our duty, and wherein we have diſhonoured God, that our ſouls may reſt in peace, as well as our bodies do reſt in quiet. So likewiſe every morning we ſhould acknowledge our thankfulneſſe to God for the comforts of the night paſt, and to crave his bleſſing upon our labours the day following.

If we continually practiſe this duty, it will keep us from groſſe ſins, and great offences, and it will make us take all occaſions to renew our Repentance with God for our ſins. Every fit of pain or of ſickneſſe that we feel, and every croſſe or affliction that we ſuffer, calls

calls loud for repentance, becauſe it is a fruit of our ſins: alſo, every bleſſing and every good thing that God is pleaſed to beſtow upon us, cryeth loud for our thankfulneſſe; becauſe it is beſtowed of his own free bounty, and goodneſſe, and not for any merit or deſert of ours. Though we are miſerable vile and wretched in our ſelves, yet God is gracious and mercifull, and doth dayly give us occaſions to glorifie him, and he doth uſe all means to bring us home again unto himſelf: for he doth not delight in the death of a ſinner, but rather that he ſhould repent and turn unto him; neither doth he deal with us according to our ſins, nor reward us according to our deſervings, but hath paid a great prize for our redemption out of this miſerable condition.

Concerning the Redemption of Man.

VVHen God ſaw man in this ſad condition, a lamentable ſpectacle of woefull miſery; then he took pity upon him, [a] and this time of his wretched eſtate was the time of Gods love to him: for ſoon after his fall God made a gracious promiſe of Redemption to him, [b] that the ſeed of the woman ſhould break the ſerpents head. This promiſe God did afterwards renew to the Patriarks, which was concerning Chriſt the Lord, that ſhould come in his appointed time, whom God did plainly reveal to ſome of the Prophets. [c] VVhen the fulneſſe of the time was come, God ſent forth his ſon made of a woman, made under the Law to redeem them that are under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons. [d] In this was manifeſted the love of God toward us; becauſe that God ſent his onely begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his ſon to be the Propitiation for our ſins. [e] The onely begotten ſon of God, who is in the boſome

[a] Ezek. 16. 8
[b] Gen. 3. 15
[c] Gal. 4. 4, 5
[d] 1 John. 4. 9, 10
[e] John 1. 18

bosome of his Father, came down from heaven, and assumed our nature, and took upon himself the guilt of our sins, to Redeem us from the curse of the Law, from the dominion of sin and Satan, and from the power of death.

1 Cor. 7. 23 [f] Christ hath also paid an infinite price for our Redemption, even his own most precious blood, and the full vialls of Gods wrath were poured out upon him, because he did undertake to satisfie the justice of God for our sins: for thus saith the Prophet, [g] *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* [h] Now let us gird up our loines with *Peter*, and binde on our sandals, [i] and let our feet be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, to be fitted and prepared for our deliverance out of prison: for the chains of our sins are taken off, and the prison doores are opened to set us at liberty, and to redeem our souls from destruction.

f Isa. 53. 6. g Acts 12. 7, 8 h Eph. 6. 15 i

This Work of our Redemption is so great a mystery, that the blessed Angels do adore it with much admiration, but they cannot comprehend it: it was decreed in heaven before the world was, and all the three Persons in the holy Trinity had their severall operations in the effecting of it.

1 John 4. 14. [k] The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. And Christ himself doth testifie that the Father sent him for this end and purpose. [l] *For the works*, saith he, *which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witnesse of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath born witnesse of me*: For a voice came from heaven when he was baptized, saying, [m] *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* The Son also assumed our nature, both soul and body: [n] For he was like unto us in all things, [o] sin onely excepted; he was every way fully qualified to be our Mediator and Redeemer, he became our surety, and he paid the debt that we did ow to the justice of God for our sins, by his death and by the

k John 5. 36, 37 l Matt. 3. 17. m Heb. 2. 17. n Heb. 4. 15 o

price

price of his blood. The holy Ghoſt alſo reſted upon him at his baptiſme, [r] and anointed him with the oyl of gladneſſe above his fellowes, [q] that in him ſhould all fulneſſe dwell, [r] and of his fulneſſe have all we received and grace for grace. God hath made him the head of his Church, and the holy Ghoſt doth convey all ſaving graces from him to all the Members of that myſticall body.

[r] Heb. 1. 9.
[q] Col. 1. 19
[r] John 1. 16.

VVherefore if we are elected unto ſalvation, and do belong unto Chriſt by the Election of grace, the holy Ghoſt will at ſome time or other work ſanctifying grace in us, and will unite us unto Chriſt by faith, that ſo we may have a modeſt and ſober aſſurance of our Redemption by him, and of our reconcilement into the love and favour of God. Why then do we not ſeek to be ingrafted into Chriſt for our Redemption? Why do we continue ſtill in a voluntary captivity and bondage, whereas we may be ſet at liberty? Why are we ſtill exiles and baniſhed from the preſence of God, whereas we may be brought again into his favour? Why do we not ſeek his face and the light of his countenance, ſeing all true felicity and happineſſe conſiſteth therein, [s] and ſeeing at his right hand are pleaſures for evermore? and why are we ſo backward in ſeeking the kingdom of heaven? Alas, we have not a true ſenſe of our own miſerable ſlavery, we do not feel the burden of our ſins, we do not ſee how the devill doth tyrannize over us, how he doth beguil us with a ſeeming pleaſure and profit in ſin: for he will not let us ſee the greatneſſe of the loſſe that we ſuſtain by it, nor the bitterneſſe of the torments that will follow after it, beſide thoſe temporall ſorrows that it bringeth upon us in this life.

[s] Pſal. 16.

Thus the devill bringeth us into ſecurity, and into a dead ſleep of ſin, and doth ſo ſtupifie all the faculties of our ſouls, that we have no ſenſe of our ſpirituall miſery, and by this means he leadeth us into a dangerous way, that tendeth to no other end but to the perdition

and deſtruction of our ſouls. Alſo we are ſo delighted with the vanities of this world, that we think of no other happineſſe, than what we do now injoy: or if there be any other heaven, than this upon earth, we will be directed to it by the guidance of our own corrupted will, and not by the Spirit of God: for the devill would perſwade us that nature can finde out a readier and an eaſier way to heavenly felicity, than by Chriſt.

Thus we are hindred, and kept back by the deluſions of the devill, by the alluring vanities of the world, and by the deceitfulneſſe of our own hearts, that we cannot come unto Chriſt for our Redemption, and to make our peace with God through faith in him, and to have an holy aſſurance of it by our ſound and true repentance.

Wherefore it doth now plainly appear that we have no power or ability in our ſelves to come unto Chriſt; we muſt be taught of God, or elſe we cannot find the way, he muſt draw us, or elſe we cannot come to Chriſt:

[t] John 6. 44 For thus ſaith Chriſt himſelf, [t] *No man can come unto me except the Father, which hath ſent me, draw him.* God

[u] Hoſ. 11. 4 doth ſometimes draw us unto Chriſt, [u] as he drew *Ephraim, with cords of a man, with bands of love*: he will give us a Spirituall light by his Spirit to finde the way, he will kindle an holy zeal in our hearts and affections to walk in it, and he will inflame our deſires, that by

[x] Gal. 3. 24 grace we may come to Chriſt our Redeemer. [x] Sometimes God doth bring us unto Chriſt by the Law, as our Schoolmaſter with a rod in his hand, by terrifying us with the threatenings of the Law; if that be not ſufficient, then he will make us feel the ſmart of his rod by afflictions, croſſes, and tribulations.

[y] 2 Cor 5. 20 God doth alſo ſend his Miniſters, [y] as his Ambaſſadors, that by the Preaching of the Goſpel they might win us unto Chriſt, and to be reconciled unto God. Chriſt doth alſo ſweetly draw us unto himſelf, as the

head

head draweth the members of the body, and as the bridegroom draweth his ſpouſe

Thus ſaith the Spouſe to her beloved, [y] *Draw me, we will run after thee.* Chriſt doth alſo lovingly invite us to come unto him, and to make us the more willing to come, he doth allure us by his gracious promiſes: [z] *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* Thus alſo he ſaith by his Prophet, [a] *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no mony: come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price: hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your ſoul delight it ſelf in fatneſſe. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear and your ſoul ſhall live.*

[y] Cant. 1. 4

[z] Mat. 11. 28

[a] Iſa. 55. 1, 2, 3

How could Chriſt expreſſe his love more freely to a poor ſinfull ſoul, than now he doth? what will move us to come unto him, if this free tender of grace cannot? But to the end we may be quite without excuſe, and that the love of God may abundantly appear unto us, the holy Ghoſt doth likewiſe draw us unto Chriſt, by giving us a true ſight and ſenſe of our ſins, by ſhewing us the means how we may be freed from the guilt, and from the condemning power of ſin, by working faith in us to apply to our ſelves the merits of Chriſts blood, and his righteouſneſſe for our juſtification, and by working us into newneſſe of life by the ſanctification of the Spirit

It doth now plainly and evidently appear, that our ſins have ſet us at a farre diſtance from God, according to this of the Prophet, [b] *But your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God, and your ſins have made him hide his face from you, that he will not hear:* For God will not regard us, untill the pardon of our ſins be ſealed to us by faith in the bloud of Chriſt, and we can have no comfort in God, nor hope of his grace and favour, untill we have ſome aſſurance of the remiſſion of our ſins by true repentance, and turning unto God. For thus

[b] Iſa. 59. 2

[a] Isa. 56. 3, 4, 5, 7 saith the Prophet, [c] *Though we have been strangers to the people of God, and as fruitlesse as a dry tree; yet if we now keep his Sabbaths, and choose the things that please him, and take hold of his Covenant, he will give us a place in his house, and an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off: he will bring us to his holy mountain, and make us joyfull in his house of Prayer, and all our offerings shall be accepted.*

Though Christ by his death and resurrection hath perfectly wrought our redemption from all our spirituall enemies, yet we have not the full vertue and power of it in this life: for we are often foiled with the temptations and suggestions of the devill, our sins do prevail against us, our sinfull lusts and unruly passions do often overpower us, [d] *and the corruptions of our unregenerate part do war against the Law of our minde, and brageth us captive to the Law of sin, so that the good which we would we do not, but the evill which we would not, that we do; it is then no more we that do it, but sin that dwelleth in us.* Wherefore we can feel the power of our redemption but in part, so long as we live in the flesh; but it will be fully perfected when *our corruptible shall put on incorruption, and our mortall shall put on immortality*, and that cannot be untill the generall resurrection at the last day, when all the enemies of our salvation shall be subdued: For death will seize upon our bodies, and will keep them in the prison of the grave, untill Christ shall come with power, and break open the prison doores by the power of his resurrection, and raise them up to immortality, and to eternall glory, and then our Redemption will be made perfect to us; and this [e] Christ hath promised, and he doth plainly manifest it to us: for when he had shewed his disciples some signes and tokens of his second comming, which were forerunners of the generall resurrection, he said, [f] *That when they see those things begin to come to passe, then they should look up, and lift up their heads, for their Redemption draweth nigh*, whereof we are as fully perswaded by faith in this life, as if we did already

[d] Rom. 7. 19, 20, 23.

[e] John 6. 54

[f] Luke 21 27, 28.

ready injoy it. Wherefore let nothing weaken our faith in our Redemption: for we may confidently rest upon it, though we have it but in part in this life: for Christ will perfect it to us at the last day, when he will raise up our bodies out of the dust, by his Almighty Power, which is the last part of our Redemption.

Here is matter of great comfort, if our hearts do piously ruminate upon the transcendent love of God to us in our Redemption. g *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* g John 3.16

Redemption is freely offered to all, yet none can have the assurance of it, but such as believe in Christ, and belong unto him through the election of Grace; these and none but these shall have the benefit of it: for they are within the New Covenant, h which Christ hath procured for them by his death: these onely shall receive the promise of an eternall inheritance, and shall be advanced to an higher degree of felicity and blessednesse, than they had in *Adam* before his fall. h Heb. 9.15

Adam had but a dimme light of his Redemption; yet it was sufficient to ground his faith upon it, and the promise of grace was very mystically delivered to him, but the Patriarks and Prophets had a clearer evidence of it: God hath given us a full demonstration of our Redemption, because Christ is come in the flesh, and hath finished the whole work of our Salvation, by treading down all principalities and powers under his feet, and by subduing to us all the enemies of our salvation; and because death is our last enemy, which will undoubtedly seize upon our bodies, we do assuredly believe, that by the power of Christs Resurrection, who is our head, our bodies shall be raised up out of the dust at the last day: for Christ hath redeemed our bodies from death, as well as our souls from the devill, that both in soul and in body we may live and reign with Christ for evermore.

Wherefore if God hath been ſo rich in goodneſſe to us, and if his grace and love hath been ſo free, as to redeem our ſouls from hell, and our bodies from the grave, even when we were his enemies, and when he ſaw nothing in us but miſery; then let us with the Prophet *David*, ſay thus with our ſelves, [i] *What ſhall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards us? how ſhal we pay our vowes which we have made to him in our Baptiſm or at any other time? we will take the cup of ſalvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord, we will be his ſervants, and will offer to him the ſacrifice of praiſe and thanksgiving.* Thus let our thoughts, and the Meditations of our hearts be alwayes upon the love of God to us, and not upon the vanities of this world; let them be ſet upon the joyes and happineſſe of heaven, and not upon earthly tranſitory pleaſures and delights; let us ſtudy how to live a ſanctified life unto God, and a blameleſſe life to our neighbours, and not how to fulfill our own ſinfull deſires, and the evill concupiſcence of our fleſh: otherwiſe we have received the grace of God in vain, and we can have no good aſſurance of our Redemption by Chriſt: for God beſtoweth his grace upon us, and hath given us the light of his Spirit, that we ſhould walk as in the light, and not in darkneſſe, that our converſation ſhould be holy and pure; and not corrupted and defiled with uncleanneſſe; but that we ſhould perform holy obedience unto God, and ſerve him with pure affections.

[i] Pſal. 116 12, 13, 14

Now let our hearts and ſouls devoutly Meditate upon the great Work of our Redemption: for it was far greater than the Creation of the whole world; God did but ſay the Word, let ſuch a thing be made, and it was made: he did not diſrobe himſelf of any part of his glory in the creation of any creature, but rather his glory, wiſdom and power was magnified in the making of the leaſt of them. But in the Redemption of man, Chriſt Jeſus, the ſecond Perſon in the ſacred Trinity laid aſide all

his

his celeſtiall and heavenly glory, which was his due from his firſt incarnation, and from eternity, and came down from his Throne of Majeſty in heaven, and humbled himſelf to the meaneſt condition of life here on earth, and to the baſeſt and moſt accurſed death, even to the death of the croſſe, that he might Rede m us from the loweſt degree of miſery, and advance us to the higheſt degree of happineſſe, even above the bleſſed Angels in heaven.

This will be exceeding great joy and comfort to us, if we have an holy perſwaſion of our Redemption by faith in Chriſt: for hereby we have a near relation unto God, being made his ſons by adoption in Chriſt, and then our ſouls will ſo delight in him, that nothing will will be hard to us that we ſhall ſuffer for his ſake, and nothing will be too dear for him that he ſhall require, and it will be the deſire of our hearts to do his will, and the joy of our ſouls to be joyned nearer and cloſer unto him; alſo we ſhall willingly part with our deareſt ſins, rather than our ſins ſhall part us from our God. This holy perſwaſion, if it be well grounded, will make us fear no adverſary power, and our ſpirituall enemies ſhall not daunt us: for we will flee unto Chriſt as our beſt refuge in all our troubles and ſorrowes; we will crave his protection in all our perills and dangers: for he is our Redeemer and our Saviour, he is the Rock of our ſalvation, in whom we muſt truſt; he will give us ſtrength of grace to endure our tryalls, to fight his battels, and to ſtand for the truth againſt all oppoſition.

We may ſafely reſt upon Chriſt, and put our confidence in him for comfort and ſuccour, when any calamity doth oppreſſe us; for help and deliverance when any ſpirituall enemy doth aſſault us: for he will be our hiding place in times of danger, and our comfort in all our ſorrowes and afflictions.

k *For God hath ſet him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, farre above all principality and power, and* [k] Eph. 1. 20, 21, 22.

might

might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not onely in this world, but alſo in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church.

Wherefore let the conſideration of all theſe benefits, which we have by our Redemption, ſtir us up with all care and diligence to perform that duty and obedience which we owe unto Chriſt, and to expreſſe all filiall fear, and reverence, all love, praiſe and thankfulneſſe to him for our Redemption, which Work neither God nor man could effect for us, but onely Chriſt, who was both God and Man.

The time of grace.

GOd is the ſole Diſpoſer of Time, and he keeps that precious Jewell in his own Cabinet, to give to the ſons of men what time he pleaſeth, and he appointeth every one to improve their time for the gaining of the grace and favour of God, and of thoſe things that do conduce to the kingdom of heaven; and not to ſpend it vainly, ſinfully and licenciouſly. To ſome he giveth more time, and to ſome leſſe, and all muſt imploy it to the glory of God, and to the good of his neighbour. God doth meaſure out our life by time, and ſome have a longer meaſure than others, and this meaſure is diſpenſed to us by moments: for we cannot recall the time that is paſt, and we do not injoy the time that is to come; ſo that we have onely the time that is now preſent, which is but a moment, and when one moment of time is gone, God doth give us another, until the meaſure of time, that God hath allotted us, be fulfilled. If we look upon an hour-glaſſe, we ſhall ſee how ſwiftly one grain of ſand runneth after another, and ſo continueth untill all be run out.

Thus it is with the moments of our life, one moment

meanfolloweth ſwiftly after another, which God would have us duly to conſider, that we may not waſte our time in vain things, but imploy it to that end for which God gave it, and that is, to the working out of our own ſalvation, that God may be honoured and glorified thereby; and therefore about whatſoever we ſpend our time, if it doth not conduce to that end, it is but loſt and vainly ſpent.

God hath given us a time for all our neceſſary occaſions here upon earth, that all things may be done in their ſeaſon: For as the Preacher ſaith, *To every thing there is a ſeaſon, and a time to every purpoſe under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to dye, a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted:* and we do obſerve the times and ſeaſons of the year, when to till the ground, and when to ſow our ſeed, when to reap our harveſt, and when to gather in the fruits of the earth. [a] Eccleſ. 3. 1, 2.

The Cœleſtiall Bodies know their times, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith: [b] *He appointeth the Moon for ſeaſons; the Sun knoweth his going down.* [b] Pſal. 104. 19.

Alſo the fowles of heaven, and the birds in the air have their times appointed: for thus God upbraideth his own people by his Prophet; [c] *The Stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow obſerve the times of their coming; but my people knoweth not the judgement of the Lord.* [c] Jer. 8. 7.

We are wiſe enough to know our times for earthly things; but we have no care to obſerve the times of grace, how and when we may gain the grace and favour of God, that he may accept of our perſons, and of our holy oblations that we offer unto him; and alſo when we may obtain from him the ſaving and ſanctifying graces of his moſt bleſſed Spirit.

The time of our life is the generall and longeſt time of grace, that God hath given us, wherein we ſhould ſeek his gracious acceptance of us in Chriſt, and whete-

in he doth work grace in the hearts of all his Elect by his Spirit.

Now if we measure this time of grace by the length of our dayes, according to the course of nature, or according to the health and strength of our bodies, or by our own foolish fancy, that measure is very uncertain: for who knoweth whether his dayes shall be many or few? Are we not dayly subject to casualities, and to sudden death? if we be strong and have our health to day, we may be weak and sick to morrow; though we dream of long life; yet it is but a dream, for we have no assurance of it.

If we thus measure the time of grace, we shall put it off with delayes, untill God doth suddenly bereave us of all time. But we must measure out our dayes by the Rule
[d] Gen. 47. 9 of Gods Word, and then we shall see, [d] *that our dayes are few and evill*; as *Jacob* said unto *Pharaoh*, and holy
[e] Psa. 144. 4. *David* will tell us, [e] that *man is like to vanity, his dayes*
[f] Psal. 39. 5. *are as a shadow that passeth away*: also, [f] that *our dayes are as an hand-breadth, and our age is as nothing before*
[g] Psal. 103. 15, 16. *God*: And in another Psalm, he saith thus: [g] *As for man, his dayes are as grasse: as a flower of the field so he flourisheth: for the winde passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.*
[h] Job 7. 6, 7. Thus saith holy *Job*, [h] *My dayes are swifter than a weavers shuttle, and are spent without hope. O remember that my life is winde.* If our life be winde, how soon then is it gone? how little then is the time of grace? and yet upon this little moment dependeth our eternall happiness: for when this life is ended, there is no more time for grace, or to seek the favour of God.

Wherefore it is extream folly to lose any part of this precious time without some gain of grace, or to spend it to any other end than to the glory of God: then much more, to waste it in sinfull pleasures, to the great dishonour of his Name, and to the destruction and losse of our own souls.

Though

Though we be in the State of Grace; yet through the corruption of our nature, and the frailty of our unregenerate part, we are subject to many slips and failings, and sometimes we do so dangerously fall, that God will hide his face from us, and eclipse the bright beames of his gracious countenance for a time; so that we shall have no sense nor apprehension of his Grace and favour to us, and the fruits of his Spirit will seem to us to be withered and dryed up.

But God hath his speciall times of grace, when he will be found of us, and when he will graciously accept us, and will manifest again the fruits of his holy Spirit, and his sanctifying graces shall again shine forth in us, when God hath wrought his own work in our hearts, and hath humbled us for our sins with his rod, he will then call to us, saying, [i] *Seek ye my face*, and our hearts must presently answer with *David*, *Thy face Lord will we seek*: for to answer presently to Gods call is the time of gracious acceptation, thus saith *David*, *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said I will confesse my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found.* Also, when we seek with all faithfull diligence unto the Lord in our tribulations, and sue unto him with all our hearts, we shall find him gracious and propitious to us, as the Lord himself saith by his Prophet, [l] *Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and finde me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart, and I will be found of you, saith the Lord.*

[i] Psal. 27. 8.

[k] Ps. 32. 5, 6.

[l] Jer. 29. 12, 13, 14.

But the holy Ghost sets down a more particular time of grace: [m] *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*, and he giveth this reason, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulnesse of sin: for God doth call to us every day by some meanes or other, to seek his face and his favour. Wherefore we must not put off

[m] Heb. 3. 7, 13.

off the time of grace untill the morrow: for as *James* saith, [n] *ye know not what shall be on the morrow: For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.*

[n] Jam. 4. 14

It is now plain and evident, that the principall time of grace is, when God is pleased to offer it, and when he doth give us the means to attain unto it: for God keeps the gift of grace in his own power, to give it to whom, and when he pleaseth, and except God doth offer it, we cannot receive it. The very first desires of seeking grace is Gods free offer of it to us: for he doth incline the will, and works those holy desires in our hearts by the operation of his own Spirit. Sometimes the holy Ghost doth work them in us upon the true sight and sense of our sins, and thereby moves us to make our peace with God by true repentance, according to this of the Prophet, [o] *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

Isa. 55. 6, 7

The holy Ghost doth also work thus in our hearts upon the sense of our wants and necessities, and upon the sense of our afflictions and tribulations, to humble our souls before God, that our hearts may be prepared to seek his love and favour, by fervent prayer. Thus saith the Prophet, [p] *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they powred out a prayer, when thy chastening was upon them.*

Isa. 26. 16.

If we do duly consider these things, and ponder well upon them in our hearts, it will teach us highly to prize that time which God doth lend us here in this life for the gain of Grace, that hereafter we may attain to eternall happinesse in the kingdom of heaven: also not to refuse any offer of Grace that God shall make unto us: first, because our time is short and momentany, and

we

we know not how long we ſhall enjoy it. Secondly, becauſe our little time is tranſitory, and paſſeth ſwiftly away, and we cannot recall one moment that is gone. Thirdly, becauſe it is the time which God hath appointed for Grace, and the time of his gracious acceptation. Fourthly, becauſe the eternall ſalvation both of our ſouls and bodies dependeth upon this ſhort time of our life. Laſtly, if we loſe any opportunity of grace that God doth give us, we ſhew great unthankfulneſſe to God, and we know not whether he will give us another opportunity for it. Wherefore we ſhould not ſpend our time idly, or unprofitably; but we muſt with all care and diligence improve it to thoſe ends for which God hath given it, to make our calling and election ſure by faith in Chriſt, to make our peace with God, whom we have offended, and to regain his love and favour, when we have loſt the apprehenſion of it by our ſins.

Many heavenly comforts we ſhall finde, if we liſten to Gods call, and receive Grace when he doth offer it. Firſt, God will be found of us, if we ſeek him with pure affections, and in the uprightneſſe of our hearts. Secondly, he will hear our ſupplications and prayers, if they proceed from a true ſenſe of the want of what we pray for. Thirdly, he will ſuccour and comfort us in our ſorrowes and diſtreſſes, if we cry unto him in the true apprehenſion of our own miſery. Laſtly, ſuch is the goodneſſe of God, that he will incline our will, and put holy deſires into our hearts, to ſeek the light of his countenance, when we are prepared for it by true humiliation and ſorrow for our ſins: for then he will hear our prayers, he will grant our requeſts, and will graciouſly accept us; though our ſins had formerly moved him to hide himſelf from us.

Conſider further, that the principall meanes of grace is by Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour, by whoſe righteouſneſſe we are juſtified, by whoſe grace we are ſanctified, and

by the merite of whose blood we are saved: so that without Christ we can neither come into grace and favour with God, neither can any sanctifying and saving graces be wrought in us to make us capable of salvation.

Now God hath appointed the sincere Preaching of his Word to be a special meanes to reveal Christ perfectly, and fully to us, and to work faith in us, whereby we are knit and united unto Christ, from whom all other sanctifying and heavenly graces do plentifully flow, and they are conveyed to us by the operations of the holy Ghost.

q Rom. 10. 17. Thus saith the Apostle, q *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*; and it bringeth in with it all other spirituall Graces. For the Word of God containeth in it whatsoever is needful to salvation, and there is no grace but we may attain to it by this meanes, if the holy Ghost doth accompany the administration of it to bring it close to our hearts.

God hath also other meanes, which he useth for the working of grace in us, and to bring us home when we go astray from him: for every blessing that we receive, every affliction that he sendeth, and every motion of his Spirit that we feel, is a call from God, and a meanes that conduceth to the gain of some grace or other. His blessings should stir us up to glorifie God with our praises and thankfulnesse: r his goodnesse should lead us to repentance, and his love to us, should binde us to love him again: also, the sorrowes and miseries that we suffer in this life should teach us godly sorrow for our sins, and patience under the crosse, they should humble us, and bring us to true repentance, and newnesse of life: so likewise every motion of his holy Spirit should move us to obedience, and to conformity of will to the will of God; and the dayly experience we have of Gods care over us, should teach us to confide in God, and to rest and depend upon him in all conditions of life whatsoever.

r Rom. 2. 4.

These

Theſe and the like means God doth uſe to quicken up thoſe graces that lye languiſhing in us, and are as dead to our apprehenſion; and alſo to make us ſeek unto him for his grace and favour, which is ſufficient to ſupport us in all our tryalls and diſtreſſes.

Theſe heavenly motions of the holy Ghoſt is Gods ſtill voice, which ſhould make deep impreſſion in our hearts, becauſe he doth thereby immediatly from himſelf reveal his will and pleaſure to us, what we ought to do; to which holy inſpirations we ought to yield our willing obedience, though it be irkſome to our nature, and croſſing the unregenerate part of our will, as to repent, and to leave a darling ſin, which we have long nouriſhed in our boſomes. This is a time when we may gain the grace and favour of God, if we are ready to liſten to this voice, and cheerfully to obey it. Wherefore this ought to be our care, to imbrace any meanes, or opportunity that God ſhall tender to us for grace, becauſe it is Gods time of grace, and he will ſecond his own time and his own meanes with a bleſſing, if we imbrace it; but if we will be feaſting, when we ſhould faſt and pray, or rejoicing when we ſhould mourn and weep, we do then diſcover too much diſobedience, and rebellion againſt the will of God.

Now we ought to examine our ſelves how we have profited under the meanes of grace, how the Word of God hath wrought upon our hearts and affections, what heavenly grace; have been wrought in us by it, or by any of Gods holy Ordinances, and what ſpirituall comfort we have found by them. Alſo, we ought to examine what thankfulneſſe we have returned to God for his bleſſings, what ſorrow of heart we have had for our ſins, how we have been humbled under the croſſe, what reformation of life Grace hath wrought in us, how we have obeyed the holy motions of Gods Spirit, and how we have been raviſhed in ſoul with earneſt deſires to do the will of God.

If

If we have lived long under a powerfull Ministery, and yet have gained little or no knowledge of Christ, and of the truth, and no faith or saving grace is wrought in us by the power of it, we have then lost so much time of grace, and we have not improved the meanes of grace to our best advantage, nor to the right end as God hath appointed, which is to gain grace for the spiritual good of our souls.

Wherefore, let these be the Meditations of our hearts, how to improve the time and the meanes of Grace to the right end, that we may be found good stewards, and profitable servants to our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, by that gain which we shall make of grace in this little stock of time which he hath given us in this life. For the more time, and the more meanes of grace we do enjoy, the more fruits of grace we must bring forth, or else we shall be unprofitable servants. If we improve our time for grace, as we ought, we shall gain the love and favour of God in Christ, our hearts will be seasoned with all spirituall graces, and our conversation will be in heaven, while we live here upon earth: for we shall live a gracious and a comfortable life now, and a glorious and blessed life hereafter. Also, let this be the true desire of our souls, to redeem the time of grace that we have lost, and to improve the meanes of grace to more profit, that the fruits of it may appear in our obedience to Gods Commandements, in our zeal to the true worship and service of God, and in our care to walk in all piety and vertue, which we may the better do, if we daily addresse our selves to God by faithfull prayer for the gracious assistance of his holy Spirit herein.

In the last place we must consider, that though God doth give us time and meanes for grace; yet we cannot attain unto it without the speciall working of the Spirit of grace in us, for he must put a spirituall light into our understandings, he must open our hearts, and incline the will, or else we cannot receive it.

All

All heavenly gifts and ſpiritual graces come from God, which the Father is ſometimes ſaid to give, according to this of *James*, [r] *Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.* [r] Jam. 1. 17.

Sometimes alſo the Sonne is ſaid to give them: for thus ſaith the Apoſtle, [t] *when he aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men*, that is, he gave not onely places of dignity and of authority to ſome in his Church; but alſo he gave them all ſpiritual indowments of grace meet for their ſeveral places and functions. But theſe heavenly graces are properly wrought in our hearts by the holy Ghoſt, how and when he pleaſeth. [t] Eph. 4. 8.

We muſt therefore crave his help, we muſt wait his time, and attend upon the means, until he ſhall be pleaſed to work grace in us, and we muſt reſolve without delaies or excuſes, [u] to accept of grace, even that very day when God doth offer it, and not to grieve his good Spirit by refuſing the ſweet tender of grace, or by loſing any opportunity, wherein God may be glorified by this heavenly work of grace in us. [u] Heb. 3. 7.

Wherefore, [u] be not thou like the deaf adder that ſtoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of charmers charming never ſo wiſely; but when any means of grace is offered, or when thou feeleſt a good motion in thy heart, be ready to imbrace it: for that is Gods call, and then Chriſt knocketh at the door of thy heart, [x] as he did at the door of the *Laodiceans*: if thou doſt preſently open unto him, *he will come in to thee, and will ſup with thee, and thou ſhalt ſup with him*; but if thou deferreſt it until the morrow, thou knoweſt not whether he will knock again or not. [u] Pſ. 58. 4, 5. [x] Rev. 3. 20.

O, what a bountiful and gratious gueſt doſt thou loſe, if thou wilt not open thy heart, when the Spirit of Chriſt knocks there, either by the preaching of his

Word, by holy inſpirations, by his bleſſings, by afflictions, or by any other means whatſoever.

If thou belongeſt unto him, thou wilt know his knock, thou wilt know his voice, thou wilt make haſt and prepare the beſt rooms in thine affections to give him entertainment, and thou wilt clear away all the filth of thy ſins by faith and true repentance, that he may come into a clean heart, that nothing may diſpleaſe, or diſcontent him: for he comes not to lodge with thee a night or two, as a ſtranger, or to ſojourn with thee a moneth or a year, and then to leave thee; [y] Eph. 3. 17. [y] *but he will dwell in thy heart by faith,* [z] and will abide [z] Joh. 14. 23 with thee for ever by his holy Spirit. When he is come, he will furniſh his rooms with his own furniture, he will perfume them with his own merits; ſo that whatſoever iſſue from thence, ſhall be a ſweet ſavour, well pleaſing and acceptable to God: he will alſo beautifie and adorn all the faculties of thy ſoul with ſpiritual and heavenly graces, he will heal and cure al thy ſpiritual diſeaſes; he will be a Prophet to thee, to teach and inſtruct thee in the wayes of godlineſs; he will be thy High-prieſt to make interceſſion for thee, and to preſent thy prayers and oblations unto God his Father; alſo, he will be thy King to rule in thy heart with his ſcepter of righteouſneſs, and to ſubdue all the enemies of thy ſalvation.

Chriſt will feaſt thee at his own table with bread of life, water of life, and with heavenly *Manna*, which are precious dainties, and ſpiritual food for thy ſoul to feed upon, and thy heart will rejoice and be glad in him. [a] Gal. 5. 22, 23. Thou ſhalt alſo injoy [a] the fruits of his Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodnes, faith, meekneſs, temperance; and all that belong unto thee ſhall partake of the riches of his goodneſs, and of his bleſſings. [b] Pſ. 24. 7. [b] *Let thy gates therefore ſtand open, that the King of glory may enter in,* and be thou as ready to receive

ceive him with all joy and gladneſs of heart, [c] as *Zacheus* was to receive Chriſt, when he was in the fleſh, who brought ſalvation to his Houſe. Be not thou like the ſpouſe in the Canticles, [d] who *would not riſe out of her bed of ſecurity to open the door of her heart to her beloved, but ſuffered him to ſtand knocking and calling, until his locks were wet with the drops of the night.*

[c] Luc. 19. 6. 9.

[d] Cant. 5. 2.

Now if thou haſt any care of thy ſouls health, ſtudy and meditate how to obſerve the times and means of grace, and how to improve them to the glory of God, and to thine own ſpiritual gain.

Canſt thou obſerve the times and ſeaſons of the year for the fruits of the earth, and haſt thou no care to take the opportunities that God gives thee for grace? learn of the marriner, who will hoyſe up ſail, when the wind ſerves for him; and when God offers thee grace, do thou raiſe up thy heart and affections to receive it. If thou refuſeſt his gracious goodneſs to thee herein, it is no wonder, if thou art barren of true vertue and piety, if thy ſoul be without ſpiritual comfort in thy ſorrows and afflictions; and it is no marvel if thou art fruitleſs in all good works.

If thou wilt make the true gain of thy time, thou muſt diligently attend to the holy ordinances of God, thou muſt thankfully receive his mercies and bleſſings, thou muſt bear the Croſs of Chriſt with patience and with meekneſs, ſubmitting thy ſelf with all humbleneſs of ſpirit to the will and pleaſure of God. Alſo, thou muſt repent of holy duties omitted, as well as of ſins committed, and howſoever God ſhall deal with thee at that very time, make an holy uſe of it for the glory of God, and for the comfort of thy ſoul.

If the devil hath deluded thee with falſe pretences, or hath lulled thee aſleep in his bed of ſecurity; ſo that thou haſt ſlighted the means of grace, and haſt vainly ſpent thy precious time without any ſpiritual or heavenly

gains, thou muſt labour with all Chriſtian diligence to recover it again, which thou maiſt do by the gracious help and aſſiſtance of the holy Ghoſt herein: for thou haſt no ability in thy ſelf, to get out of theſe dangerous ſnares of the devil; or to redeem the time that thou haſt loſt.

To conclude, if thou doſt deſire to make the true gain of the time of grace, thou muſt ſtrive to remove out of thy heart whatſoever doth diſpleaſe, or diſhonour God, and whatſoever may hinder the operations of the holy Ghoſt, and the current of grace to thy heart. For if thy mind is carried after the love of the world, after vain pleaſures, or ſinful delights, and if thou doſt prize any thing above grace, or love any thing more than thou loveſt Chriſt; the love of God cannot dwell in thee, and ſpiritual grace cannot be wrought in thee, until thy heart be prepared to receive it, which muſt be by the powerful working of the holy Ghoſt.

The danger of delaies in ſeeking Grace.

THere is now great need, that we do ſeriouſly bethink our ſelves, and that our hearts do faithfully meditate upon it, what danger we may incurre and run into, if we do not accept of grace when God doth offer it; if we do not come to God when he calleth, nor do what he commandeth at his own appointed time: alſo, how dangerous it is to delay our repentance, and the reformation of our ſinful lives from day to day, and to cover our delaies with this vain pretence, that to morrow we will perform that which God commandeth, and then we will amend all that is amiſs; and thus we put off this precious time of grace, and thus we deferre our repentance for our ſins, until God, who is the ſole commander of time, doth ſhut us out of all time, to the utter-

utter perdition of our poor soules, which he may justly do, if we thus abuse the singular benefit of time, which God hath given us here for the gaining of his grace and favour.

This is a dangerous and a cunning deceit, which the devil useth to bring us to destruction; if he can perswade us to make delaies in the work of grace, and in doing that which God commandeth: for by this means we shall incur the wrath and high displeasure of God, we shall indanger our repentance, and conversion unto God, and consequently our eternal salvation. The devil knoweth that one sin will draw on another, that custom will bring us to an habit of sinning; and he that will not receive the tender of grace to day, may not have the time, or the means of it to morrow, and he that refuseth to repent to day, may be more indisposed for it to morrow.

Also, he knowes how hard it is to leave old sins, and and that God may justly withdraw the comfort of his presence, and may deny us his grace, if we do abuse his goodness and loving kindness to us: by these our delaies in grace we do exasperate the justice of God to punish us, aod thereby we heap vengeance upon our own heads,[a] and we do treasure up wrath against the day of wrath. Likewise he knoweth how uncertain our life is, and the many and perillous chances that may come to hinder us from making our peace with God in time, and therefore he will labour to perswade us to deferre a little, and then a little more, and that hereafter we shall have better occasion, and fitter opportunity to do that which God commandeth, then for the present we have.

[a] Rom. 2. 5.

If we continue in sinne without repentance, the power of the devil is more established and confirmed in us, the good inclination of our will is more weakned and perverted, the faculties of our mind are more corrupted, our understanding is more darkned, and our unruly passions

ſions are more ſtrengthned againſt the rule of reaſon, and harder to be repreſſed by continuance of time, than they were before.

Wherefore, we cannot be ſafe from the evil of thoſe ſubtle ſuggeſtions of the devil, unleſs we ſhroud our ſelves under the protection of God by prayer, and keep our ſouls cloſe unto Chriſt by faith: for then he will preſerve us from the danger of thoſe ſnares, and he will keep us, that we be not deluded with his inchantments, to loſe the opportunities of grace, that God doth give us. For it is grace onely that doth keep us from the habit of ſin, that no ſin ſhall be rooted in us; it is the ſtrength of grace that giveth us power over our ſins, and that keeps us from the deluſions of the Devil: and therefore if God withdraws his aſſiſting grace from us, we have then no means to be preſerved from thoſe dangerous deceits of the devil, or to make the way of vertue, and of godlineſs eaſie to us.

If we have been deluded by the ſubtilty of the devil, by the allurements of the world, or by the intiſements of the fleſh, to continue long in a ſinful courſe of life, and to neglect the means of grace, when it was offered, or to delay our repentance, and turning unto God, to the great hazzard of the ſalvation of our ſouls; let our heart melt into godly ſorrow for our long delaies in ſeeking the grace and favour of God, and for loſing ſo much time without the gain of ſome grace for the good of our ſouls, that God may be glorified thereby. If God ſhall make our life but like the ſhorteſt day of the year; yet we ſhall diſcover too much groſs ingratitude to him, if we will not afford him one hour of that day for his honour and glory: then much more is our unthankfulneſs toward him, if our life be lengthned out to the longeſt day, and if we do alſo injoy the ſun-ſhine of the Goſpel; and yet have no care to ſeek his face, or to gain his favour, untill the twilight of that day, when ſickneſs and infirmities will diſable us, and when decrepit

eerpit old age doth seaze upon us. How can we expect that God will accept of our sower winter fruits, when we deny him our sweet and pleasant summer fruits? what fruits can the seed of grace produce, when our hearts have been overgrown with bryers and thorns all our whole life? can we spend all the oyle in our lamps in seeking for earthly things, and provide none to have our lamps burning, that we may attend upon the bridegroom when he cometh? [b] The foolish Virgins in the Gospel did thus, and therefore, *when the bridegroom came, they were not ready, and went not in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut, we should therefore watch, for we know neither the day, nor the hour, wherein the Son of man cometh.* [b] Mat. 25.

If we do seriously think upon the many and great benefits that we have already received from God, and yet we do hope for, and expect much more, even eternal happiness hereafter; we cannot but be more careful to labour for true saving grace in the best part of our daies, without which we cannot attain to it: and not to spend our time vainly in seeking the profits and pleasures of this world, reserving the last and worst part of our lives for the service of God, and for the Kingdome of heaven: for we know not whether God will then accept it.

If God doth give us grace then to repent (for repentance is absolutely his own gift) yet we must then lament and bewail these dangerous delayes which we have made: for by how much the more we prolong our returning unto God, the more we increase our sins, and so much the greater will be our pain and sorrow in our repentance, if it be true, and sound: also, the amendment of our lives will be much the harder. Time is not gained, but lost, which we spend without some fruits of grace and godliness, which indeed is the true gain of time: and therefore we should seek unto God while he may be found, we should call upon him while he is neer: [c] Isa. 55. 6.

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otherwise, though we seek him, he will not be found, and though we call upon him, he will not answer, nor be intreated. Thus saith the Apostle, [d] *now is the time* [d] 2 Cor. 6. 2 *acceptable, now is the day of salvation.*

But we have just cause to bewail our condition: for the corruption of our nature doth so weaken us, and the power of our spiritual enemies doth so prevail against us, that we cannot break through such strong opposition, as they make to hinder this holy work of grace in us.

The devil doth cunningly dissuade us from it, the world doth strongly allure us to follow still the vanities of it, and our own flesh doth dayly intice us to carnal pleasures and delights; so that we can finde no time to make our peace with God, or to improve the means of grace to his glory, and to our own comfort. Though we do sometimes strive against our sins; yet we cannot overcome them, or if one sinne be subdued, another is ready to rise up against us; also, though we cannot actually commit a sin; yet we may commit it in our sinful desires to it, in a sinful remembrance of it, in consenting to it, or in suffering it to be done, when by our place and authority we might hinder it. We have also just cause to bemoan our selves: for though we do labour for grace, and do use all means for it to the best of our power, and yet we cannot attain unto it. Though it be thus with us; yet we must still continue our best endeavours to oppose all the enemies of our salvation, and we must still use the means of grace, and wait upon God, until he shall please to work grace in us by his Spirit; also, we must pray unto him with a faithful heart, that by the omnipotent power of his grace, [e] and by the rod of his strength, which is the Word and Sprit, he would make us able to overcome our corruptions by seasoning our hearts with grace, to subdue the power of our sins by repentance, to improve our time to the glory of God, and also to break through

through the ſnares of the devil, the world and the fleſh. Then God will ſo bleſs us in our pious indeavours, that we ſhall prevail againſt all oppoſition and adverſary power, not by our own ſtrength, but by the might and power of Jeſus Chriſt our gracious Redeemer; [f]whoſe grace and favour is ſufficient for us, and whoſe ſtrength is made perfect in our weakneſſe, under whoſe banner we fight theſe ſpiritual battels for the honour of his great name. [f] 2 Cor. 12. 9.

Of Chriſt our Redeemer.

IF it be ſo, that Chriſt is our Redeemer, and hath wrought our redemption with his own blood, and hath purchaſed for us a new Covenant, and an everlaſting inheritance in heaven, as formerly in part hath been ſhewed; alſo, if we have all our ſtrength and power from him againſt our ſpiritual enemies, without whom we cannot ſtand againſt them, nor break through the bands of death to injoy that heavenly inheritance which he hath prepared for us: we muſt then know who Chriſt is, what is the nature of his Perſon, what is his power and ſtrength, and how he was qualified for this great work, that we may have a ſure ground to confide in him, and to reſt upon him as our Redeemer and onely Saviour.

Alſo, we muſt know how he hath ſatisfied the juſtice of God for our ſinnes, how he hath conquered death, hell, and the devil, and what price he hath paid for our ranſom: for without this heavenly knowledge and faith to apply it to our ſelves, we can draw no comfort to our ſouls from Chriſt, neither can we have any good aſſurance, that we are freed from the curſe of the Law, that the juſtice of God is ſatisfied for our ſins, that ſin hath no condemning power over us, that the ſting of death

is taken away, and that we are reconciled again unto the favour of God.

God hath revealed these deep mysteries to us in his holy Word, that the meditations of our hearts may be enlarged upon them for our instruction and edification, and for the comfort of our souls, as God shall give light to our understandings by his blessed Spirit. But as the Prophet saith, [a] *Who can declare his generation, which was from eternity? for Christ our Redeemer is the onely be-*[b] *gotten Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father, and was promised and expected since the beginning of the world. And when the fulnesse of time was come, that God had ap-*[c] *pointed for his incarnation, the Word was made flesh: for* [d] *he took on him the seed of* Abraham, *and personally united to* [e] *his Divine nature a true humane body,* [e] *of the seed of the Virgin* Mary, [f] which was indued with a reasonable soul; and the holy Ghost did so sanctifie her wombe, that he was born without sin, either original, or actual. And though the humane nature of Christ was taken into his Deity, whereby this union was never to be dissolved; yet either nature had their whole properties, and operations remaining still unconfounded, and therefore he was true God, and true man, [g] like unto us in all things, [h] sin onely excepted, and those two natures made but one person in Christ, [i] to whom God the Father hath given all power in heaven and in earth; so that he commandeth and over-ruleth al created power whatsoever.

Is. 53. 8.
[a] Joh. 1. 18.
[b] John 1. 14
[c] Heb. 2. 16
[d] Luc. 1. 31. 32.
[e] Mat. 26. 38
[f] Heb. 2. 17
[g] Heb. 4. 15.
[h] Mat. 28. 18

God did also give him three honourable offices, that he might be every way fit to be our eternal Mediatour between God and us: for God ordained him to be a Prophet to teach and instruct us; to be a Priest to make intercession for us, and to offer such a sacrifice to God for our sins, as he would accept; and to be a King to rule and govern his Church, and also to rule in our hearts by his Spirit.

Christ being thus qualified, hath fulfilled for us and

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in our nature, whatſoever the Law did require of us, and his righteouſneſs is imputed to us by faith for our juſtification, that no guilt of ſinne might cleave to us in the ſight of God.

When Chriſt did execute that part of his prieſtly office, which was the offering up of his body a ſacrifice for us, no heart can conceive, and no tongue can expreſs the bitter torments which he ſuffered both in his ſoul, and in his body, to ſatisfie the juſtice of God, for our ſinnes, and to purchaſe our freedome and redemption out of the captivity of ſinne and Satan. [k] He was a man of ſorrowes, he was deſpiſed, he hath born our griefs, he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities, the chaſtizement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes we are healed. All we like ſheep are gone aſtray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Hereby it appeareth, that the juſtice of God cannot diſpenſe with any ſinne: for he did ſeverely puniſh it in his own dear Son; becauſe he found the guilt of ſinne upon him, though it were none of his own: for he was in his own nature free from any ſpot, or ſtain of ſinne whatſoever.

[k] Iſa. 53.

Now learn this inſtruction, that when thy heart doth meditate on Chriſt thy gracious and bleſſed Redeemer, thy thoughts muſt not reſt upon his humane nature; but with the piercing eye and power of faith, thou muſt raiſe them up to contemplate with all due reverence his Deity, & admire with great admiration, that the eternal Son of God was pleaſed for thy ſake, thou poor ſilly worm, to leave his glorious manſions in heaven, and to lay down that heavenly glory, which was ever his due, and to condeſcend ſo low as to be clothed with thy nature, which thou haſt ſtained with the guilt of all manner of ſinne, that he might cloth thee with his own righteouſneſs, and reſtore thee again to the firſt purity and integrity in Gods account, wherein thou wert created.

Now then canst thou ever put an end to thy meditations on his abundant love to thee? canst thou be unthankful to him, that he hath been so rich in goodness to thee, so free in his mercies, and so liberal in his benefits to such a worthless creature, as thou art? let him therefore be the chief joy of thy heart, and put thy whole confidence in him by faith for thy salvation: do not forget so great love; but close with him, imbrace him with the armes of thy faith, be guided and directed by him in all thy wayes, and yield all submission to Christ thy King and Governour, to obey his Laws, and to observe his commands.

Feed thy heart then, and refresh thy soul by ruminating upon the excellencies and al-sufficiency of Christ thy Saviour, with thoughts beseeming the honour and dignity of his sacred person. For if thou thinkest upon him onely as he is man, thou doest too much undervalue his Highness, and if thou conceivest of him, as only God, thou canst not draw then neer unto him without dread and terror, by reason of his glory and majesty, and also by reason of thy pollutions and defilements. If Christ were onely man, he could not have satisfied the justice of an infinite God, neither had his blood been a sufficient price for mans redemption; and if onely God, he could not have suffered the penalty of the Law by his death. But if thou doest meditate on him, and apply thy self to him by a true and a lively faith, as he is thy onely Saviour, both God and man, [l] then thou must [l] Heb. 4. 16. come boldly to the throne of grace, where thou shalt receive, and find grace to help in time of need; and thy meditations of him will be exceeding comfortable to thy soul. Thou maist safely fix thy faith upon him, [m] Act. 4. 12. and ground thy hope in him for thy salvation: [m] *for there is no other name under heaven, whereby thou must be saved, but by the name of Jesus*: and according to the esteem thou hast in thy heart of that Name, such is thy faith, and such is thy hope and confidence in him. For

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if thy thoughts concerning him are low, it is a manifest sign that thy faith in him is weak; but if they are truly raised up to contemplate and acknowledge his Deity through his humanity, its a good evidence that thy faith is strong in him. Wherefore, renounce all that is in nature, or in humane learning, and trust not to thine own abilities, or to common grace for thy redemption: for they profit thee nothing for thy justification, though they may conduce much toward a well ordered and civil life: but strive to get faith; and all sanctifying grace, that the righteousness of Christ may be imputed to thee, and that thy life may be truly sanctified, and reformed to the will of God.

We must consider further for our better understanding of Christ our blessed Redeemer, that he is set forth in the holy Scriptures by some resemblances, which are very comfortable for us to meditate upon; because they shew our union with him, his special care of us, and the great benefits that we shall have by him, if we can make an holy application of him to our selves by faith. First, he is resembled to a vine, and then we are the branches, [n] *I am the vine, saith Christ, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.* If we are ingrafted by faith into this true vine, we are then so firmly knit and united unto Christ, that no power, nor policy can separate us from him: for [o] *we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation*: we shall be purged and pruned from the guilt, and from the pollutions of all our sins, and we shall be dressed and adorned with grace and vertue, that we may bring forth much fruit in a pious life, and holy conversation.

[n] Joh. 15. 5.

[o] 1 Pet. 1. 5.

Secondly, Christ is resembled to an head: [p] for he is the head of the Church, and we are the members of that body, to be guided and directed by him, to be taught and instructed of him, and as the head preserveth the natural body; [q] so is Christ the Saviour of every member

[p] Col. 1. 18.

[q] Eph. 5. 23.

member of his myſtical body; and as all the members of the natural body draw their ſenſe and motion from the head, and are ſerviceable, and obedient to the command of the head, as the hands to work, the feet to run, the back to bear any heavy burden, and the like; ſo do we draw all our ſenſe and motion in heavenly things from Chriſt, by reaſon of the operation of the holy Ghoſt, and we ought to yield all duty and obedience to him, to do what he commandeth with all cheerfulneſs of ſpirit, and willingly to bear his Croſs, though the burden be very heavy to our weak nature. This will give us great aſſurance, that we have a neer relation unto Chriſt, if we find this readineſs of will in our ſelves, to ſubmit to his moſt bleſſed and holy will.

[r] Heb. 13. 20. Thirdly, Chriſt is called [r] *that great ſhepheard of the ſheep*, and thus he ſaith of himſelf, [s] Joh. 10. 11, 14. *I am the good ſhepheard, and I know my ſheep, and am known of mine: the good ſhepheard giveth his life for the ſheep.* The Prophet telleth us from the Lords own mouth, that it is the [t] Ezec. 34. 23. property of a good ſhepheard [t] *to feed the flock, to ſtrengthen the diſeaſed, to heal the ſick, to bind up that which is broken, to bring again that which is driven away, to ſeek that which is loſt, and to protect his flock from the danger of* [u] Iſa. 40. 11. *the wolf.* *Iſaiah* did propheſie thus of Chriſt. [u] *He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepheard: he ſhall grather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his boſome, and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with young.*

This tender care Chriſt hath over every lamb and every ſheep that belongeth to his fould. If we are then his [w] Joh. 10. 3, 4. ſheep, [w] we know his voice, we will hear it, we will follow him, and obey his voice.

[x] Pſal. 23. Thus ſaith *David*, [x] *the Lord is my ſhepheard, I ſhall not want.* If the Lord be our ſhepheard, then ſurely our ſhepheard is the Lord *Iehovah*, under whoſe ſhadow we ſhall be preſerved, and from whom we ſhall receive all ſweet conſolation and refreſhing. Thus ſaith the Lord by

by his Prophet, [y] *And I will set up one ſo pheard over them; and he ſhall feed them, even my ſervant* David, which is Chriſt the Lord. [y] Ezek. 34. 23

Fourthly, Chriſt is reſembled [z] *to the tree of life, which did bear twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the Nations.* [z] Rev. 22. 2.

Now then, [a] if we ſit down under the ſhadow of this tree, we ſhall find great pleaſure and delight, we ſhall be preſerved from the heat of Gods wrath, we ſhall be refreſhed thereby in the ſcorching heat of afflictions and fiery tryals, and under this ſhadow the burning heat of our ſinful luſts will be cooled and aſſwaged. If we feed upon the fruit of this tree by faith, which is the body of Chriſt crucified upon the Croſs, and his blood powred out, it will be ſweet and pleaſant to our ſpiritual taſt: [b] *for it will be the bread of life to make us live for ever,* [c] *and his blood will be a fountain of living water, which will ſpring up in us unto everlaſting life.* The leaves of this tree are his gracious promiſes, which will heal and cure all the ſpiritual diſeaſes and wounds that our ſins have made in our ſouls, if we do apply them to every particular wound by faith. [a] Cant. 2. 3. [b] John 6. 58 [c] Joh. 4. 14.

Laſtly, Chriſt is reſembled to a bridegroom, and then the whole Church of God, and every true believer is his ſpouſe, and his bride. That is that which *Iohn* the Baptiſt ſaid, [d] *He that hath the bride is the bridegroom,* which he then ſpake of Chriſt. [d] John 3. 29

Now, there is a wonderful joy and rejoicing between the bridegroom and the bride, and the Prophet expreſſeth Gods rejoicing over his people by this mutual joy that is between them. [e] *As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, ſo ſhall thy God rejoice over thee.* Who can deſcribe the perfect love of Jeſus Chriſt to his ſpouſe? who can declare the loving affections of the bridegroom towards his bride? what excellent benefits doth he beſtow upon her of his own bounty and grace, without [e] Iſa. 62. 5

out any of her deſervings? though ſhe hath many ſpots & blemiſhes; yet he will not forſake her but will ſanctifie her, and make her holy, chaſt, and pure, fit to be his ſpouſe, being adorned with his own ornaments of grace. This doth evidently appear in that excellent ſong of *Solomon*, where the admirable love of Chriſt to his ſpouſe is expreſſed, and alſo the intire affection of the Church unto him This is Chriſt our gracious Redeemer, and theſe are ſome of the heavenly comforts that we ſhall enjoy by him, if we can imbrace him by faith, as our bleſſed Saviour, and bridegroom of our ſouls.

We may now draw much comfortable matter from theſe ſeveral reſemblances of Chriſt, for the ſtrengthning of our weak faith, and for the ſupporting of our drooping ſpirits; alſo they will afford us excellent matter for our inſtruction, to teach us how to demean our ſelves towards him; and where to find true comfort in time of need. If we are branches of this vine, we ſhall draw grace and vertue from him to make us fruitful in all good works, to walk uprightly before God, and to live comfortable in what eſtate, or condition ſoever we be. If Chriſt be our head, we will be directed by him in all our wayes, we will ſeek unto him for protection againſt all our enemies, for preſervation from all caſualties, and dangers, and for deliverance out of all our troubles: alſo, that we may receive from him ſome influence of ſpiritual grace, without which we cannot move one ſtep toward heaven.

If Chriſt be our ſhepheard, then we muſt be harmleſs and meek, as his lambs, our ear muſt be open to his voice, we muſt follow him and none but him; [f] for he will make us to lye down in green paſtures, he will lead us forth beſide the waters of comforts, and will bring us forth in the paths of righteouſneſs, and will alſo plentifully provide for us: though his rod of correction, or his ſtaffe be upon us; yet they ſhall be for our great be-

[f] Pſa. 2. 2. 3

nefit

nefit and consolation. So likewise, if we can shroud our selves by faith under the shadow of this tree of life, it will greatly refresh our souls, and we may find cure for all our spiritual diseases by applying the promises of the Gospel, and the merit of Christs sufferings to our selves by faith. But above all, if we can feed upon the blessed fruit of this tree by faith, in the hearing of the Word preached, in the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper, and in our devout and zealous meditations on Christ crucified for us, it will nourish us up to eternal life.

Lastly, if we are betrothed unto Christ by faith, he will then rejoyce over us to do us good, he will make us pure and holy, and will hide all our deformities of sin under the robe of his own righteousnes out of Gods sight, and will adorne us with his own spiritual and heavenly graces, that we may be lovely in his sight, and fit to be wedded unto him for ever hereafter in the Kindome of heaven. We are also bound by vertue of this our union to love Christ with pure affections, to honour him above all, and to keep our selves from spiritual fornication, tha the may delight in us to do us good, and never to leave and forsake us.

The consideration of these things is well worthy our serious and devout meditations; becaus hereby we shall the better know Christ our Redeemer, and we shall draw neerer into communion with him, who is the fountain of all true consolation, and the onely meritorious cause of our salvation, by that redemption which he hath wrought for us. This knowledge of *Christ* is above all humane wisdom, and therefore S *Paul* came not to the *Corinthians with excellency of speech, or of wisedome, to declare unto them the testimony of God. For he determined not to know any thing among them, save Iesus Christ and him crucified.* Wherefore, if we can gain this heavenly knowledge by our studies and meditations of *Christ*, we have enough to make our soules gracious here, and eternally blessed hereafter. 1 Cor. 2. 1, 2.

Of Christs Prophetical Office.

NOw we come to the ſeveral offices of Chriſt, from whence we may draw ſome profitable matter for our inſtruction, and for our comfort. And in the firſt place, God ordained him to be a Prophet, according
[a] Deut. 18. 18. as the Lord ſaid unto *Moſes*, [a] *I will raiſe them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he ſhall ſpeak unto them all that I ſhall command him.*

This is that great Prophet of the Lord, Chriſt Jeſus, who had not his Prophetical gift by divine revelation, as all the Prophets had; but it was inherent in him, and he had it from his own divine nature, and by his own power, and therefore he needed not that any thing ſhould be revealed unto him. Chriſt gave ſome mani-
[a] Luc. 21. [b] Luke 19. 43, 44. [c] Lu. 21. 25. [d] Mat. 24. [e] Mat. 20. 18, 19. [f] Mat. 26. 34. feſtation of this his office by way of propheſie: [b] for he foretold the deſtruction of the Temple, [c] the great deſolation that ſhould ſhortly come upon Jeruſalem, [d] and alſo the ſigns which ſhall be before the day of Judgement, likewiſe he foretold [e] what ſhould be done to himſelf in his paſſion, [f] and how ſhamefully *Peter* ſhould deny him; and not a word that proceeded out of his mouth could fall to the ground, but muſt be fulfilled
[g] Joh. 14. 6. [h] Joh. 2. 24, 25. in due time, becauſe [g] he that was the Truth did ſpeak it. He [h] did know the ſecrets of every mans heart, he knew who believed in him, and who did not, and alſo what miſchief his enemies intended againſt him, for nothing could be hidden from him. Chriſt hath given ſome glimps of his Prophetical gift to his Miniſters, to foreſee the judgements of God that will fall upon a Nation, or people, if they are above meaſure ſinfull, and will not be reclaimed, nor brought to repentance;

but

but Christ by his own preaching hath now put an end to the gift of Propheſie ordinarily.

If it be ſo, that every word which Chriſt hath ſpoken muſt be fulfilled, how ought we to fear and tremble at his threatnings? how careful ſhould we be to make our peace with him by ſound repentance and turning unto God, before he puts in execution what he hath threatned? alſo how comfortable are his promiſes, which in their time ſhall be performed, if we reſt upon them by faith? how can any affliction, or ſorrow tire if we reſt upon a promiſe of ſuccour from Chriſt? and how can we deſpair of our ſalvation, if we do believe, that Chriſt hath perfectly wrought our redemption, and hath made our peace with God his Father? Alſo, if it be ſo, that Chriſt doth ſee by his divine nature into the ſecrets of all hearts, we ought to be vigilant and careful to keep our hearts cleanſed, and purified from the guilt of ſinne into the blood of Chriſt, by the dayly renewing of our faith and true repentance, that no darling ſin may be cheriſhed there: for he can ſee it and find it out.

But this was not the chief end that Chriſt did intend in this his office: for he was anointed by the holy Ghoſt at his Baptiſm to preach the Goſpel of peace, according to this propheſie of him, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath ſent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the priſon to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, &c.* Chriſt did execute the part of his Prophetical office in the whole courſe of his Miniſtry, and *the people were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine: for his word was with power, and he taught them as one having authority.* His whole doctrine was pure and divine, it was directed to the manifeſtation of his heavenly Fathers will, and to the regulating of our ſinful lives according to Gods commandements, which he comprehended in this ſhort

Iſa. 61. Luc. 4. 18.

k Mat. 7. 28, 29.

l Luc. 4. 32.

sum, [m]*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* Christ did rightly interpret the moral Law, and freed it from the false glosses of the Pharisees, for whereas that commanded onely external obedience to the commandements, according to their interpretation of them, as not to kill, not to commit actual adultery, and the like; [n] his doctrine addeth internal observation, as not to speak angry words to our neighbours hurt, not to lust, and the like And whereas the ceremonial Law commanded to offer up a sheep, or an oxe for our sins; the doctrine of Christ doth instruct us, to offer up a broken and a contrite heart, that our sins may be washed away in the blood of Christ by faith, and to purpose and resolve the reformation of our sinful lives. Christs doctrine tended wholly to the perfect service of God, to draw our minds from the vanities of this world, and to set our affections upon the Kingdom of heaven. Also, it tended to the depression of our spiritual pride, to the mortification of our sinful appetites, and to the stiring up of our heavenly cogitations, to peace of conscience, tranquillity of mind, purity of body, and the comfort of our soule: in brief, his doctrine did contain whatsoever is necessary to salvation: for he did reveal the whole counsel of God.

[m] Mat. 22. 37. 39.

[n] Mat. 5.

As the doctrine of Christ was divine and heavenly; so his whole life and conversation was exactly sutable thereunto; for it was most upright and holy, and a lively table, wherein was expressed the perfection of his doctrine. This may teach all the Ministers of his word, to frame their lives according to the purity of their doctrine, that their good example may confirm their doctrine, and be a pattern for others to follow. Christ doth still execute this part of his Prophetical office in his Ministers, by the preaching of his Word, and the vertue and power of his Spirit doth also joyn with their continual preaching, to make it powerful for edificati-

edification and instruction, and effectual to salvation. Wherefore our hearts and affections must be sanctified and seasoned with grace, and our eares must be spiritually bored, when we come to hear the Word of God preached, and we must faithfully pray, that his Spirit would accompany the outward ministration of it, to make it profitable and comfortable to our souls.

Examine now thy self, what impression the doctrine of Christ hath made in thy heart, which thou hast often heard sincerely preached, and how thou hast been profited by it, what knowledge thou hast gained in heavenly things, how thou art confirmed in the truth of Gods Word, how thy faith in Christ is established, what hope thou hast of eternal salvation, and how firmly thy faith is grounded upon the promises of God. Also, how thou art humbled for thy sins, and what reformation of life it hath wrought in thee, what patience and meekness of Spirit thou hast in thy sufferings, what zeal for the glory of God, what constancy in thy tryals, and what love thou beareſt to thy neighbour: these and the like benefits thou maist have by the Word of God, if thou art a profitable hearer of it. If upon due examination of thy self, thou doest find any of these operations of the Spirit of God in thee, it is a sure evidence, that he hath made thee a profitable hearer of his Word. 6

Many did hear Christs doctrine from his own mouth, and yet they received no good by it; so thou maist hear his holy Word, and be no whit the better for it, if it be not preached as wel to thy heart by the Holy Ghost, as it is to thine ear by his Ministers. Oh, consider how many worthy sermons thou hast heard without profit, what thou hast been taught, and yet not edified, nor reformed; because thou didst hear them with uncircumcised ears, and with a poluted and unbelieving heart: for thy heart is naturally unfit to receive the heavenly doctrine of Christ, until the holy Ghost doth prepare it, and 1-a-6

and season it with grace, that it may bring forth fruit
o Heb.10.12 unto newness of life. o There is so much fallow ground in us, which is barren and unfruitful, that the good seed of the Word of God cannot be sown to us in righteousnes, to reap the fruits of it in mercy, until the holy Ghost breaks up this fallow ground with the power of his sanctifying grace, neither can we seek the Lord, that he may come and rain righteousnes upon us. Wherefore,
p Jer. 4.4. p we must be circumcised to the Lord, and the foreskins of our hearts must be taken away, and the vail that is upon our understandings must be removed, and we must be purified by faith, before we can be made fruitful, in an holy and vertuous conversation, by the Ministry of the word.

Wherefore imbrace the holy doctrine of Christ with pure affections, lay it up in a clean heart, and ruminate upon it in thy serious meditations, that it may abide with thee, to make thee grow dayly in grace, vertue and godlines, until thou comest to a full stature in Christ. Consider therefore, and observe, how thou art inwardly affected when thou heares it, what delight thou hast in it, and what impression of grace it makes in thy heart: for if thou delightest in the Lords Sabbath, and rejoicest when his Word soundeth in thine ears, q *as the babe did leap for joy in* Elizabeths *wombe, when she heard the salutation of the Virgin* Mary, *because Christ was then in the Virgins wombe; thou art then in a blessed and comfortable condition,* r *and thy soul shall delight in the Lord, who shall feed thee with the heritage of* Jacob.

q Luc.1.41

r Isa.58.13, 14.

Christ doth also teach us what we ought to do, by his works that we dayly see, both of justice and of mercy, which are his silent Preachers, and therefore they ought to be carefully regarded: for there is no act of his but is intended for our instruction. *Noah* was many years in building the Ark, which was a long sermon to teach the
1 Pet.3.20 world of the ungodly what God intended to do. God s waited then for their repentance and conversion an hundred

dred and twenty years. while the Ark was a preparing. [1] *Noah* alſo was a Preacher of righteouſneſs to them all that time, and did warn them of the wrath of God, which did hang over their heads for their ſins. Thus doth God alſo deal with us: for he doth viſit us with ſickneſs, he doth teach us thereby to prepare our ſelves for the hour of diſſolution, and to perfect our account which we muſt make to the great Judge of heaven and earth at the laſt day. that ſo we may willingly reſign up our ſelves unto God, when death ſhall part them from our bodies. When God ſuffereth us to fall into temptations, then he calls us to pray for his aſſiſting grace, for ſtrength of faith, and for conſtancy to ſtand out againſt the devil to the end, that he may give us the crown of victory. If he doth viſit us with loſſes, troubles, or afflictions, it is to teach us patience and meekneſs, and to humble our ſelves under the hand of God, until he doth deliver us. If he doth chaſtiſe us for our ſins, it is to bring us to repentance. When God beſtoweth his bleſſing upon us, or removeth the croſs from us, [2] then he calls for a thankful remembrance of his mercy and goodneſs to us: howſoever God dealeth with us, either in judgement, or in mercy, it ſhould teach us to glorifie him, as well in our ſufferings as for his bleſſings.

[1] 2 Pet. 2. 5

[2] Pſ. 50. 15

Thus God doth teach and inſtruct us what we ſhould do, and how to obey his will, both by his Word, and by his Works; and as our ear muſt be open to his Word, that it may be conveyed to our hearts by the holy Ghoſt; ſo we ſhould dayly obſerve the Works of God, and how he dealeth with us, that our hearts may receive inſtruction, and our tongues may bleſſe his great and glorious name. Wherefore we ought to liſten to Gods voice in them, that our hearts may return an anſwer of obedience agreeable to his will.

Of Christs Priestly Office.

GOd did also ordain Christ to be a Priest, accord-
[a] Ps. 110. 4. to this of *David*,[a] *The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of* Melchisedeck. He was anointed to his office, not with the material oyl of the sanctuary, but with the spiritual unction of the holy Ghost, when he was baptized, and he did execute it, partly by his prayers, which he did frequently offer up to God his father for all his elect in the dayes of his flesh, and partly by that sacrifice, which he offer-
[b] Heb 7. 24, 25. ed up upon the cross at his death. [b] Christs priesthood is unchangeable and eternal: for he is still our High-priest, and ever liveth to make intercession for us; and therefore he is able also to save us to the uttermost, that
[c] Heb. 8. 1. come unto God by him. [c] We have such a High-priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Ma-
[d] Heb. 7. 26, 27. jesty in the heaven. [d] *For such an High-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sins, and made higher than the heavens.*

When Christ did offer up himself a sacrifice to God, his whole humane nature was bound to the altar of his Divinity with the cordes of unseparable union, and
[e] Isa. 53. 10 love, [e] *and his soul was made an offering for sinne, as well as his body, which was crucified, and his precious blood,*
[f] Heb. 7. 27. *which was poured out upon the Cross.* [f] This sacrifice, though it were but once offered, was sufficient to satisfie the justice of God, to appease his wrath, to blot all our sins out of his book of remembrance, and to perfect for ever them that are sanctified.

[g] Rev. 1. 6. This is also piously to be considered, [g] *that Christ by his eternal Priesthood, hath made us Kings and Priests*
[h] 1 Pet. 2. 5 *unto God, and his Father,* [h] *and an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

These

These sacrifices are our prayers, our praises, thanksgivings, and a broken and a contrite heart for our sins; also, our deeds of charity to the poor members of Christ, are and odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable an well pleasing to God. *Paul* did beseech the *Romans* [k] *to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is their reasonable service*: so that whatsoever we offer unto God, it must be offered with a sanctified heart, which is washed and purified in the blood of Christ by faith, and indued with sanctifying grace from above, and then our sacrifice will be clean, and accepted of God. Though our prayers and praises be imperfect, and come farre short of that which they ought to be; yet if they proceed from a sincere heart, and are offered up by Iesus Christ our High-Priest, then he will perfect them with his own righteousnes, and present them to God his Father for us, and we may rest assured, that God will be pleased to accept them graciously.

[i] *Phil.* 4. 18.

[k] *Rom.* 12. 1

Wherefore, seeing Christ hath made us priests unto God, because we belong unto him, we must offer up our prayers and oblations to God, and not to Saints, or Angels: for he is the author and the giver of every blessing and mercy that we receive, he provideth for us food and raiment, and whatsoever is needful both for this present life, and for that which is to come; he doth protect us from dangers, he doth support us in our tribulations, and delivereth us out of our distresses, when we cry unto him with a faithful heart. We have therefore great cause to ascribe all honour and glory unto him, and thankfully to acknowledge, that God is the sole author of all our good, to whom we must return all praise and thanks for it. Also, if our prayers and oblations have no relation unto Christ by faith, they cannot be accepted, neither can we confidently hope to receive a gracious return of them with a blessing, except we believe that Christ our Advocate will present them to God his Father.

If we did duly consider, how much we stand in need of Gods helping hand, and of his assisting grace, to carry us on through all the troubles and dangers, that we shall meet with in this life; also, how God doth continually follow us with his tender mercies and loving kindness, we would not be so slack in our prayers, and praises unto him; and if we did consider that our prayers must mount up even to the throne of Gods Majesty, they would not be so cold, so dull, and so much clog'd with worldly cares and sinful thoughts as commonly they are, which doth hinder their swift ascent up to heaven: but we would labour to be more heavenly minded, and to put more holy zeal and fervency into them, and to send our faith along with them, which will soon bring them unto Christ, and then he will present them unto God for us. So likewise, if we consider how careless we are in the worship and service of God, how ready we are to fall from him, how imperfectly our best duties are performed, what sins we dayly commit, and what wrath and fury we do justly deserve for them; we should then be more humble, more affected with godly sorrow, and more carefull to renew our repentance every day; our sighs and groans for our sinnes would proceed from our hearty contrition, and from true compunction of spirit, and then our faith in Christ will give us a firm assurance of the pardon, and forgivenes of them all: for thus saith the Lord, [l] *To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.* Also, [m] *Thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

[l] Isa. 66. 2.

[m] Isa. 57. 15

Wherefore now, if we think to have our wants and necessities supplied by our industry in our callings without prayer; if we think to be supported in our troubles, or to be delivered out of our miseries with prayer; to

be

be nourished at our tables, or refreshed in our beds without prayer; and to be eased of our paines, or recovered of our diseases without prayer, we shall either miss our desires, or else we shall have them without a blessing. We cannot conceive how prevailing faithful prayer is with God, if it be presented to him by Christ. Thus saith *James*, n *The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and if he commit sins, they shall be forgiven him.* And again. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. *Elias* prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years, and six moneths; and he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. o At the prayer of *Abraham*, God healed *Abimelech*, and his wife, and his maid servants; and they bare children. p By prayer *Hannah* obtained a sonne. q *Moses* by prayer did stop the flud-gates of Gods fury, that were ready to be poured out upon his own people, for their idolatry in worshipping the golden calf. By prayer we may obtain any blessings from God, and escape any judgement that he hath threatned. Likewise our interest that we have in Christ by faith will make our praises and thanksgivings to God for blessings received to be accepted; and will also make them not to return empty again into our bosomes. If our repentance for our sinnes be without faith in Christ, it will give us no good assurance of pardon, though we do express all the outward signes of true humiliation; and though we break our hearts with grief, yet we can conceive no hope of forgivnes without Christ: for Christ onely must procure our pardon, and bring us again into the love and favour of God.

n Jam. 5. 15 16, 17, 18

o Gen. 20. 17

p 1 Sam. 1.

q Exod. 32. 11.

Of Christs Kingly Office.

[a] Pſa. 2. 6, 7. GOd did likewiſe ordain Chriſt to be a King, according as he ſpake by *David*, [a] *I have ſet my King upon my holy hill of Sion. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* The Angel alſo that was ſent to the Virgin *Mary*, told her, [b] *that ſhe ſhould conceive in her womb, and bring forth a Son, and ſhould call his name Jeſus, who ſhould be great, and ſhould be called the Son of the higheſt, and the Lord God ſhould give unto him the throne of his father* David, *and he ſhould reign over the houſe of* Jacob *for ever, and of his Kingdome there ſhould be no end.* But Chriſt came not to be a temporal King upon earth, but to be a ſpiritual and heavenly King, to over-rule and ſubdue all the enemies of his Church, and to rule and reign in the hearts of all his elect by his Spirit: for [c] Joh. 18. 36 thus he ſaith of *Pilate*, [c] *My Kingdome is not of this world.* Notwithſtanding he did ſhew ſome apparant ſigns of his regal power and authority, when he was upon earth: [d] *for he ſtilled the boyſterous winds and raging ſea by his command*; [e] *he caſt out devils by his own authority*; [f] *he triumphed victoriouſly over death, hell and the devil by his reſurrection from the dead*; [g] *and by his glorious aſcenſion up into heaven.*

[b] Luc. 1. 31, 32, 33.

[d] Mar. 8. 27. [e] Mar. 5. Mat. 28. 6. [f] Act. 1. 8.

[g] Col. 1. 18. Chriſt was a King from eternity, [h] and God made him the head of his Church at his aſcenſion in the ſame nature as he was our Mediatour, God and man, to preſerve and defend it from all adverſary power, and to rule and govern it by his word and ſpirit in righteouſneſs and in truth. Thus doth Chriſt ſtill execute his Kingly office, by ſetting up his Kingdome of grace in our hearts, by reſtraining the power of the devil, and by giving us a gracious ability to ſtand againſt all his temptations and wicked ſuggeſtions. Alſo, Chriſt by his

his regal power in us doth weaken and beat down the power of all our sinful lusts, and evil concupisence, and of whatsoever rebelleth against his Spirit, and he boweth our will by the powerful operation of the holy Ghost, to yeild him ready obedience, as our King and Governour, and so to prepare us by the vertue and power of his grace, that at length he may bring us to his eternal Kingdom of glory.

Christ is [i] that highest branch of that cedar, spoken of by the Prophet, who came of that holy line by succession from *Adam* to *Abraham*, and so to *David*, and then to the Virgin *Mary*, and he was of the same nature with that tree, but without sinne: him did God crop off by his death, and did plant it again at his ascension upon an high mountain and eminent; when he made him the head of his Church, which became a goodly cedar by the promulgation of his Gospel, under whose boughs every true Believer shall have protection from dangers, comfort in their tribulations, and refreshment for their dejected spirits and sorrowful souls: none are exempted from Christ; but all fowl of every wing, both Jew and Gentile shall dwell in the shadow of the branches of this cedar, they shall be comforted and protected, [k] as *Elijah* was from the rage and fury of *Iezebell*, when he sat under the Iuniper tree; they shall be preserved from eminent dangers, [l] as *Deborah* was from *Siseraes* great host; [m] and as *Daniel* was from the Lions: and as many more of the servants of God have been preserved in their greatest perils. *Iohn* calls this goodly cedar [n] the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the Nations: for they have a soveraign vertue to heal and cure all the spiritual diseases of our souls, if we can rightly apply to our selves by a true faith the promises of the Gospel, and the merits of Christ crucified for us. We need not then fear the power, or malice of our spiritual enemies, or the dangers that are incident to us in this life, if we can shroud

Eze. 7. 21, 23

[k] 1 King. 19. 4, 5, 6, 7.

[l] Judg. 4.

[m] Dan. 6. 22

[n] Rev. 22. 2.

our

our selves under the shadow of this tree. Here is great consolation for our poor souls against the condemnation of sinne, the fiercenes of Gods wrath, the fear of death, and against the devil, who hath the power of death; because Christ is our King, our head, and a tree of life to us, to comfort us in all our miseries, to strengthen us against all the assaults of the devil, to cure us of all the wounds that sinne hath made in our souls, to shelter us from the wrath of God, and to bring
[o] Rev. 8.16 us to eternal life.

Though [o] Christ be King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and hath the command over all created power and principalities; yet when he was in the flesh, he did vail the glory of his Deity with our nature, and laid a-
[p] Phil. 2.7,8 side his regal power and authority, [p] and made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: and the more he suffered, the more did his innocency appear, and the greater was his honour in the conquest that he got over all his enemies, that he might strengthen us in our sufferings with assured hope of a glorious victory over all our spiritual enemies, though sometimes we may be foyled by them; and also to comfort us in all sadnes of spirit, and in whatsoever we shall suffer for his Names sake. It is no dishonour to us to be made like unto Christ our head, though it be as he was in the lowest degree of his humiliation, when he was made
[q] 2 Tim. 2. 12. the scorn of men: [q] *for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him*: he hath gone before us in the same steps, to make the rugged path of afflictions plain and smooth to us. [r] If we resist the devil, with the shield
[r] Jam. 4. 7. of faith, Christ our King will make him flie from us. If we cease not to labour and strive against our sins and corruptions, though our natural strength cannot overcome them, yet Christ will give us strength of grace in his good time to subdue them: for he will not suffer any enemy to overthrow his Kingdome of grace, if once

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it be planted in our hearts; but he will keep and defend it from the ſpoilers: and though the devil doth take advantage of our ſins, and thereby ſeeketh to root out that ſpiritual ſeed of grace which is in us; yet he ſhall never prevail: for it is grounded upon an immortal foundation, which cannot be overthrown; it may be ſhaken with his boiſtrous and violent temptation, but it ſhall never be caſt down; becauſe our faith is built upon a ſure rock, which is Chriſt Ieſus our King and head. If ſorrows and croſſes breaks in upon us, which we could not prevent, nor avoid, we need not fear: for we ſhall ſee the ſalvation of Chriſt, either in our ſtrength and patience to bear them meekly, or in our deliverance out of them, or elſe he will ſanctifie them to our good. We need not cark and care for the things of this life; but when we have done our beſt indeavour in an honeſt and lawful calling, we muſt leave the event and ſucceſs to God, which peculiarly belongeth unto him, and then he will have a care of us: [f] *for man liveth not by bread onely, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.* [g] *God feedeth the young ravens, when they cry unto him; then much more will he feed us*: for it is part of his Kingly office, to provide all things that are needful for thoſe that belong unto him. Shall not the head provide for the members of the ſame body? and ſhall not Chriſt provide for us, who have neerer relation to him by faith.

[f] Deut. 8. 3.

[g] Luc. 12. 24.

Now try and examine thy ſelf, ſearch into thine own ſoul, to ſee if Chriſt hath ſet up his ſcepter of righteouſneſs in thy heart, to bear rule in thine affections, to regulate thy crooked and perverſe will, and to bring unto his ſubjection whatſoever reſiſteth, or rebelleth againſt the Spirit of grace. If thou doſt find the fruits of ſanctifying grace in thee, then make a further ſcrutiny, to ſee unto what meaſure of grace thou haſt attained. What corruption hath it mortified in thee? what ſtrong holds of ſinful luſts hath it beaten down?

how

how is the body of ſinne diſmembred and weakned? how ſtrong is thy faith, to reſt and depend upon Chriſt in all difficulties and dangers? canſt thou joyfully bear the ſcandal of the Croſs? canſt thou meekly bear the loſs of thy friends, of thy liberty, or eſtate for his ſake? haſt thou faith and patience to ſuffer afflictions, perſecution, ſword, or famine for him? and canſt thou reſiſt unto blood, if Chriſt thy King ſhall call thee to it? then it is an evident ſign, that his Kingdome of grace is well eſtabliſhed in thy heart, and hereafter thou ſhalt have a large inheritance in his Kingdome of glory.

2 Pet. 1. 10 " *Wherefore give all diligence to make thy calling and election ſure, that thou mayeſt be inveſted into his Kingdome of grace here, which will bring thee hereafter to eternal bleſſedneſs in the Kingdome of heaven.*

Now ſet thy mind and the meditations of thy heart upon Chriſt, as he is thy King, and reſolve with an holy reſolution to ſubmit thy ſelf to his rule and government, to be directed by him in all thy wayes, and to expres thy thankfulnes to him for his great care of thee, who by his divine providence diſpoſeth all things for thy good. If troubles and calamities follow thee like the billowes of the Sea, Chriſt will calm them: if they are ready to overwhelm thee, then even then will Chriſt

Mat. 14. 31 take thee by the hand, " as he did *Peter* upon the ſea, and will keep thee from ſinking. If God looks angerly upon thee for thy ſinnes, Chriſt will appeaſe his wrath, and make interceſſion for thee. If death looks upon thee with a grim countenance, and is ready to bereave thee of thy ſoul, and to expoſe thy body to the worms;

Job. 19. 25 yet know with holy *Iob*, x *that thy Redeemer liveth*:

y Luc. 16. 22. alſo, y *that he will give his Angels charge to carry thy ſoul up into* Abrahams *boſom, and at length he will raiſe up thy body out of the duſt, and will make it a glorious and incorruptible body, fit to live and raign with him for ever.* Thus and much more will Chriſt do for all thoſe that have any relation to him by faith, or that belong to his ſpiri-

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tual Kingdom, for the honour of his great Name, and for the eternal good of his Church.

Of the Paſſion of Chriſt.

WHen Chriſt had finiſhed his Prophetical office in his Miniſtry, and had wrought ſo many miracles as ſeemed good to his divine wiſdome, the time was then come, that he muſt offer up a ſacrifice to God for our redemption, which was his whole humane nature, ſoul and body for our ſins: then [a] *God delivered him up to the power of the devil, and into the hands of his enemies for our offences; becauſe the guilt of all our ſinnes was charged upon him.* For before this very time, neither the devil, nor his deadly enemies had any power againſt him: this was the time which God had decreed in his ſecret counſel, that Chriſt ſhould ſubmit himſelf to their malice and power, that the work, which God had ſent him to do might be finiſhed: and when that work was perfectly wrought, then God delivered him out of their power by his reſurrection and aſcenſion. Wherefore we ought to prepare our hearts for holy and devout meditations upon the Paſſion of Chriſt, which was moſt bitter to his humane nature; becauſe the wrath of God was poured out upon him for our ſins, and the powers of darkneſs were let looſe againſt him, like ſo many wolves to worry this immaculate Lamb of God, or like ſo many fierce maſtifes againſt the Lion of the Tribe of *Juda*; but the innocency of Chriſt did carry him through his whole Paſſion, and by his own power he overcame the fury of all his enemies; though they were permitted to torment and torture him at their pleaſure, even to the death. Chriſt ſuffered nothing for himſelf, but it was for all thoſe that were of the election of grace, the guilt of whoſe ſins he did

[a] Rom. 4. 25.

take upon himſelf, and to pay their debt, to ſatisfie the penalty of the Law for them by his death; and the juſtice of God by the merit of his blood: alſo, it was to cloth them with his own righteouſneſs, that they might be juſtified in the ſight of God. Therefore, let
[a]Lam. 1. 12 no circumſtance of his Paſſion paſs without due conſideration, [b] *Behold, and ſee, if there be any ſorrow like unto his ſorrow, which was done unto him, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted him in the day of his fierce anger.* How was the perfection of beauty ſtained? How was the Sun of righteouſneſſe clouded? How was the bright morning ſtarre darkned? How was the Lord of glory contemned, blaſphemed, ſcorned, and ſpightfully uſed? How was perfect holineſs and innocency accuſed, rejected, condemned, cruelly tormented, and moſt ſhamefully killed? And how was Truth it ſelf deſpiſed and troden under foot? Can we think upon his Paſſion without tears, and mourning, if we belong unto him? Can we ruminate upon it, and not accuſe and condemn our ſelves, who were the cauſe, why he ſuffered theſe things, and much more? For the guilt of our ſinnes brought all this evil upon him; our ſins brought the eternal Son of God from his glorious palace in heaven, to be of the loweſt degree and condition among men here upon earth, and to be expoſed to all the ignominy, reproach and cruelty, that the devil, and wicked men could put upon him; otherwiſe we had been ſtill aliens and ſtrangers unto God; we had been ſtill under the curſe of the Law, and under the dominion and power of ſinne and Satan.

Wherefore we have great cauſe to admire the riches of his mercy, of his goodneſs and love to us; nothing could move him to do this for us, but his tender mercy, and his free grace: for he ſaw nothing in us to move him to pitty, but our miſery and wretched condition; this was the time of his love, then did he caſt his skirt over us to hide our ſhame, and then did he undertake this great work of our redemption. Now let the conſideration

ſideration of what Chriſt hath ſuffered for us, and of the great benefits which we received thereby, bind us in a firm bond of love and thankfulneſs to him, and how to expreſs it by our due reſpect to all his Commandements.

The incarnation of Chriſt without his Paſſion could profit us nothing; the purity of his doctrine could not edifie our hearts, if he had not ſhed his blood to cleanſe us from our ſins; his prayers to God could not avail us, nor procure mercy for us, if he had not offered a ſacrifice, and ſhed his blood to ſatisfie the juſtice of God for all our tranſgreſſions; alſo, the perfect pattern of his holy life could not bring us to the integrity of converſation, if he had not died, that ſinne might be mortified, and killed in us, and if he had not alſo roſe again, to quicken us up to newneſs of life. It is therefore the Paſſion of Chriſt that reconcileth us to God, that takes away the guilt of our ſinnes, that gives us power to mortifie and ſubdue them, that pulleth out the ſting of death, that bringeth heavenly joy and comfort to our dejected ſpirits, and at length will bring ſalvation to our ſouls.

But an unregenerate man is not ſenſible of the bitter paſſion of Chriſt; he can feel no ſweetneſs in it, becauſe he hath no ſpiritual taſt; he knows not the power of it, and he can have no benefit by it, ſo long as he is in that condition; becauſe he hath no ſpiritual relation to Chriſt. He lives in health, wealth, and pleaſure, he feels no miſery, he is not afflicted with croſſes, troubles and ſorrowes, like other men; his mind is not troubled, and his thoughts are not diſquieted for his ſinnes, they come not neer his heart; and therefore he regardeth not the afflictions of *Joſeph*, he looks not after the Paſſion of Chriſt, nor after the ſalvation of his own ſoul thereby; but he bleſſeth himſelf in this his condition, though there be no true comfort in it. Thus the devil deludes him, and leads him on in blindneſs of

underſtanding, in hardneſs of heart, and in groſs ſecurity, to the great danger and hazzard of his ſoul; unleſs God in much mercy doth annoint his eies with his ſpiritual eye-ſalve, to let him ſee his own ſad condition, and to bring him unto Chriſt by faith. Let no man therefore meaſure his ſpiritual condition by thoſe outward bleſſings that he enjoyeth: for a poor man may be rich in grace and godlineſs, and a rich man may be empty and void of all piety and goodneſs. God doth commonly give more wealth to the wicked, than he doth to his own ſervants, [c] and their large portion of earthly bleſſings may be for their hurt.

[c] Eccl. 5 3

Conſider now, O vain man, who bleſſeth thy ſelf in thy plenty, that thy miſery is ſo much the greater, by how much thou art leſs ſenſible of thy ſinne, and the cloſer thou art joined to the world, the farther thou art from Chriſt, and the more thou delighteſt in earthly pleaſures, the leſs comfort canſt thou have in the paſſion of Chriſt. Though thy riches and honours do dayly increaſe; yet thy ſinnes will make them bitter to thee: for the leaſt of all thy ſinnes, though conceived but in thought onely, and never acted, will bring thee under the curſe of the Law, and will make thee lyable to the eternal wrath of God, and it will ſo pollute and defile thy ſoul, and ſo poiſon the whole man, that God will abhorre thee for thy filthineſs, and whatſoever floweth from that corrupted fountain is unclean. Thy riches and pleaſures will keep thee from mount Calvary, where Chriſt was crucified, ſo long as thou delighteſt in them more than in the meditation on the Paſſion of Chriſt. The bleſſings, which thou injoyeſt, are curſes unto thee, ſo long as thou art without Chriſt, and him crucified, and continueſt in thy ſinnes without repentance. There is a ſting in every thing that thou poſſeſſeſt, which ſting is the evil of ſinne, and it will wound thy ſoul to the death, if it be not cured by the blood of Chriſt, which he ſhed in his paſſion, and it muſt

muſt be truly applied to thy heart by faith. Do not think that the mercy of God will ſave thee: for if thou haſt no intereſt in Chriſt crucified, and neglecteſt the means of grace when it is offered, the guilt of thy ſinnes cleaveth ſtill to thy ſoul, and thou canſt lay no claim to the mercies of God, but art under the ſeverity of his juſtice.

Where is now the civil honeſt mans comfort, that thinks to gain heaven by his outward form of godlineſs, without the blood of Chriſt? What is the condition of the great men, and mighty hunters of this world, who think they are highly in the favour of God, becauſe they abound in all earthly pomp and pleaſure, if they have no intereſt in the paſſion of Chriſt? Surely, their condition is no better than that of the *Laodiceans*, [d] who thought themſelves rich and increaſed with goods, and had need of nothing, and knew not that they were ſpiritually wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked. If any cloud of afflictions and croſſes doth but ſhadow their earthly felicity, it takes away all their joy, and it is ready to break their hearts: for they think that to be their greateſt miſery; becauſe they do not ſee how poor, and naked they are of grace, nor the evil of their ſins, how they are holden in ſubjection to every carnal and baſe luſt, and to every evill concupiſcence, which will bring all miſery whatſoever upon their ſouls. [d] Rev. 3. 17.

But let my heart ſtill ruminate and meditate upon the Paſſion of my dear Saviour, [e] *and let it be the deſire of my ſoul to know Ieſus Chriſt, and him crucified, who is my wiſdome, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption.* For [f] *it is onely the blood of Chriſt, who through the eternall Spirit, offered himſelf without ſpot to God, that doth purge our conſciences from dead works, to ſerve the living God.* Alſo, *Iohn* ſaith, [g] *that the blood of Chriſt the Son of God, cleanſeth us from all ſinne*; ſo that no ſpots, no ſtaines, no guilt of ſinne ſhall cleave to our ſouls to our condemnation; [e] 1 Cor. 2. 2. [f] Heb. 9. 14. [g] Rev. 1. 7.

demnation; and as he in himſelf according to his divine nature was infinite, ſo the price, which he paid at his Paſſion for our redemption, was of infinite worth, and the benefits that we receive by him are likewiſe infinite.

If we are cleanſed from the guilt of all our ſins by the blood of Chriſt, then the ſting, which ſin hath put into all things that we poſſeſſe, is taken away, and we may comfortably uſe them to the glory of God; and Chriſt by his reſurrection and aſcenſion hath ſanctified them to us for our good: riches ſhall not make us proud, or ambitious, nor ſteal away our hearts from God; want and penury ſhall not make us repine, or murmur againſt the providence of God, to make us forſake him; *but all things ſhall work together for our good*: death ſhall not be terrible, but advantage to us, and we ſhall ſleep quietly in our graves, until the general reſurrection; becauſe no guilt of ſinne will lie down with us in the duſt to follow us unto Judgement. Though ſinne hath wounded our ſouls; [i] *yet if we fear his Name, the Sun of* Mal. 4.2. *righteouſneſs ſhall ariſe with healing in his wings to cure it*: for [k] *Chriſt like the good Samaritan, will pour in wine and* [k] Luc. 10. 34. *oyl to cleanſe and heal it.* Though ſinne doth ſometimes over-power us; yet Chriſt by vertue of his death will ſubdue and kill it in us, and by the power of his reſurrection he will quicken us up to newneſs of life; and he will make our unruly paſſions and ſinful deſires to be tributary and ſervants to us, by the power of his Spirit, and of his ſanctifying grace, [l] as *Joſhua* made the *Gibeonites* hewers of wood, and drawers of water for the houſe of God Joſh. 9.23.

Laſtly, [m] Chriſt hath delivered us by his Paſſion from the wrath to come, and from all the puniſhments that are due to us for our ſins. [m] 1 Theſ. 1. 10.

Chriſt did not begin his Paſſion, until he had fulfilled all righteouſneſs in his life and doctrine, that the Law required; though his whole life was a life of ſuffering and of ſorrow. But when he knew that the time was at hand

hand, when he muſt offer up his body a ſacrifice to God for the ſinnes of the world, [n] he told his diſciples, that one of them ſhould betray him into the hands of his enemies, [o] & that they all ſhould be ſcattered from him, and alſo what he ſhould ſuffer in his Paſſion: notwithſtanding, he did not ſhrink from it, but did willingly undertake it; becauſe it was his Fathers will to have it ſo. Wherefore, he did arm himſelf with divine patience and meekneſs to ſuffer whatſoever was appointed in Gods decree ſhould be put upon him, and he prepared himſelf by prayer for that great work. This is to teach us to ſubmit with all meekneſs of ſpirit to the will of God in all our ſufferings, how to prepare our ſelves for them, and how to demean our ſelves in them.

[n] Mat. 26. 2.

[o] Joh. 16. 32.

God hath appointed every man ſome work to do, and when one work is finiſhed, he hath another ready for him: for God requires that we ſhould be diligent, and painful in our callings, frequent in holy duties, and induſtrious in his vineyard. [p] The good Houſholder in the Goſpel rebuked thoſe that did ſtand all the day idle. [q] Idleneſſe was one of the ſins of *Sodom*, which brought down fire and brimſtone from heaven upon it. This is one of the properties of a good wife, [r] *that ſhe looketh well to the wayes of her houſhold, and eateth not the bread of idleneſs.*

[p] Mat. 20. 6.

[q] Eze. 16. 49.

[r] Pro. 31. 27.

God doth not appoint to every one their work alike: for *Paul* had more work appointed him, than any of the Apoſtles: [s] for the care of all the Churches came dayly upon him. *Abraham* had harder work to do, when he was to offer up his onely Son to God, than any of the Patriarchs. If God appointeth much work, he will give time to doe it; if his work be hard, ſtrength, and ability to go thorough with it. Wherefore, if God ſhall call us to any hard ſervice, which is not pleaſing to our nature, or may ſeem impoſſible to humane ſtrength, we ought not to conſult with fleſh and blood what to do, but to be obedient to the will

[s] 2 Cor. 11. 28.

and

and pleasure of God, though we can expect no outward help, nor support in it: for if we rest upon God, he knoweth how & when to make us able to perform what he commandeth, and to bear what he layeth upon us. If we believe that God will assist us in his own work, we shall set upon it with good courage and Christian fortitude. That we may the better do any work that God commandeth, we must prepare our selves for it by faithful prayer, and then rest upon the assisting grace of God with stedfast hope, that he will both help us in it, and will bless and prosper our indeavours to his glory and to our comfort. Thus we should do every day in the works of our calling; but chiefly on the Lords day, when we should spend our whole time in his worship and service.

Now let our hearts faithfully meditate upon the Passion of Christ, and upon every particular that he suffered for our sakes, and then we shall find the bitterness of it: for the wrath of God was in every part of his sufferings, and followed him from place to place, even to mount *Calvary*, until divine justice was fully satisfied for all our sins: then we shall imbrace him with hearty affections, and our souls will rest comforted in the assurance of our redemption thereby.

of Christ's Agony in the garden.

The hour is now come, when Christ must pay the whole debt to God his Father, which he did undertake for us; now is the time, when the justice of God must be satisfied for our sinnes, now doth God deliver up his dear Son to the powers of darkness, now doth he cloud the bright beams of his glorious countenance from him, and leaves him to himself to encounter with the devil; because he saw the guilt of all our sins upon him, and now doth the devil take a double advantage against our dear Saviour, and with all his power and

malice

malice he doth fiercely set upon him in a single combate, thinking now to prevail, because God did seem to discountenance him, and also because there was sin, and that very great, which was laid to his charge: for the guilt of all the detestable and abominable sinnes of all the elect of God was imputed to him, and the devil knew how odious and hateful sin was in the sight of God; also, the devil knew that such was the rigour, and strictnesse of the justice of God, that he would not spare his own natural Son, if he found him clothed with sinful and polluted garments. But the devil was much deceived in Christ: for though he had sinne upon him; yet he had no sinne in him, he had no sin of his own, but our iniquities were laid upon him; because he did stand between the justice of God and us, to shelter us from the anger, and wrath of God, which was our due for all our transgressions, and also to suffer whatsoever was due to us by the Law, to free us from the curse of the Law: but Christ was no longer under the severity of Gods displeasure, than until his justice was satisfied, our redemption perfectly finished, and our atonement made with God. Notwithstanding the devil out of meer malice to mankind, doth labour to the uttermost of his power, to hinder this great work of our salvation, which Christ was now about to effect, by seeking to destroy our blessed Saviour.

From hence we may learn to be afraid of sinne, because the justice of God will spare none, if the guilt of sinne be upon them, and if they are not washed and made clean with the blood of Christ by faith, but do sleep in their sinne without repentance. Also, we may observe the cunning and the malice of the devil against the children of God: for he will then soonest assault them with his temptations, when they are under Gods visitation, or when he doth hide the light of his countenance from them; because he thinks then to prevail, and that they are then least able to resist him; whereas

God doth usually give his servants most grace, when crosses or afflictins are upon them. But this is our comfort, that the devil can prevail no more against us, than he did against our gracious Saviour: for Christ will restrain his power in regard of our weakness, and he will hide himself no longer from us, than until we are truly humbled for our sinnes, and that our hearts are cleansed by faith and sound repentance. Lastly, though the devil did what he could against Christ to hinder us of our salvation; yet he was not able to compass his wicked design: for Christ did confound him, and did fully finish his great work; which he had undertaken; although it were exceeding bitter to his humane nature: thus will Christ confound all the enemies that seek the ruin of our souls.

Now did Christ feel the burden of our sins presse so hard upon him, that his very soul was heavy even to the death; now did God begin to pour out his wrath upon him, and to let loose the principalities and powers of darkness to torment his innocent soul; and now did God offer his beloved Son a cup of trembling, and wrung out the very dregs, which he did willingly drink, because his Father gave it him: for thus he said unto Peter, [a] *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* [b] His Agony in the garden was but a tast of this cup, and yet it was so strong and so bitter to him, that his sweat was like great drops of bloud trickling down to the ground: so that an Angel was sent from heaven to strengthen him, and to comfort him in the assurance of his Fathers love. For the sorrow of his heart, and the anguish of his soul, was so great, [c] *that he prayed three several times to his heavenly Father, if it were possible, to let that cup passe from him;* which was, that he might in himself expresse unto us a true Passion of humane weakness for our comfort and consolation, when our weak flesh fainteth under the pressure of grief, or calamity: [d] for the spirit may be willing and ready

[a] Joh. 18. 11.
[b] Luk. 22. 44.
[c] Mat. 26. 39.
[d] Mat. 26. 41.

ready to ſuffer, though the fleſh be weak.

There were many bitter ingredients in this cup of our Saviours paſſion, which he was to drink for our ſakes: for every ſcorn and contumely that was put upon him, every blaſphemous word that was ſpoken againſt him, every ſtripe of the whip, every thorne that pierced his tender temples, and every nail that faſtned him to his Croſſe, were exceeding ſharp and bitter to him: becauſe it was for ſinne, and they were all venomed with the malice of the devil, and the wrath of God went along with him in all his Paſſion, until he had ſuffered ſo much as the juſtice of God required: but chiefly the fear of death did moſt perplex his humane nature, by reaſon of the ſting that was now in it: wherby he did manifeſt the truth of his humanity, which was not exempted from humane paſſions, though it was alwayes free from the infection of ſinne. If Chriſt had not dyed for us, we had reaped no benefit by his life for our juſtification, the lothſome diſeaſes of our ſouls had not been cured, but [e] we had ſtill remained dead in our treſpaſſes and ſinnes: for nothing could kill the power of ſinne in us, but the death of the eternal Son of God, and nothing could quicken us up in a ſpiritual life, but his reſurrection from the dead, and nothing moved him to dye for us, but his tender love and compaſſion to us. When Chriſt was in the fleſh, he had a ſhare in all our miſeries, even from his infancy, and when he was to dye, he ſuffered more than any heart is able to conceive; whereby he hath ſweetned the bitterneſs of our miſeries, and hath opened a ready way for us to find comfort in our ſufferings, if we can make our title good in him by a true faith.

[e] Eph. 2. 1.

God doth keep this cup in his own hand to give to whom he pleaſeth, [f] *and if he giveth it to us that are his ſervants, that we muſt drink of this bitter cup of affliction and ſorrow: though the wine be red, and it be full of mixture, yet we ſhall not wring out the dregs thereof, and drink*

[f] Pſ. 75. 8.

them; for they are reserved for the wicked. Christ our blessed Redeemer hath drunk the dregs of this cup for us, and hath made it a cup of salvation, and a cup of consolation, healthful and profitable for us in the end, though it be bitter and uncomfortable in the taste. We need not then be dejected in our spirits, when we are under the Cross, if we consider that our sufferings come
i Ier. 30. 24 from the hand of the loving and tender Father, *i to correct us with judgement, not in his anger, to refine the dross, and to purge away the corruption that is in us, but not to consume and destroy us.*

If we conceive through humane frailty, or through the weakness of our faith, that this cup is too strong for us, and that we are not able to bear it, we may pray, and that earnestly and often, to have it removed, and to passe from us, if it may stand with Gods good pleasure, to whose holy will we must alwaies submit our desires: for if it be not his will to deliver us, it will be his will to comfort us, if we do patiently attend his appointed time.

b Ps. 27. 14 This is holy *Davids* counsel, *b wait on the Lord*, saith he, *be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart:*
c Ps. 34. 8. *wait, I say on the Lord.* And again he saith, *c Blessed is the man that trusteth in him.* If we thus wait on the Lord, he will also wait to do us good: for thus the Prophet
d Is. 30. 18 expresseth the wonderful goodness of God to his people. *k* And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you. What can more strongly move us to wait patiently the Lords time, when he will be pleased to send us comfort in our sorrows, and deliverance out of them? *l* God hath also commanded us to
l Ps. 50. 15 call upon him in our troubles, and he hath promised to deliver us; and as he hath commanded the one, so he will never fail to perform the other.

m Ier. 25. 15. & 49. 12. But when the Lord giveth this cup to the wicked, *m* it is the wine cup of his fury to them for their destruction, and though they refuse to take it; yet they shall certainly

tainly drink it. Sometimes the Lord maketh his own people drink very deep of this cup: for thus the Prophet bewaileth the sorrows and afflictions of *Jerusalem*, [n] *Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury, thou hast drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.* But the Lord their God will take a time to plead their causes when they repent, and forsake their sinnes, and turn unto him. [o] *Behold, saith the Lord, I have taken out of thy hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury, thou shalt no more drink it again, but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee.* If God be angry with his servants, it will be but for a night, joy will come in the morning: if he doth suffer the wicked to afflict them, it will be for a short time, and then he will give them a double measure of consolation for their sorrows, and at length will pour out his fury in full measure upon their enemies

[n] Isay 51. 17.

[o] Isay 51. 22, 23.

Though it was the will of God that Christ in his humane nature should drink this cup, and the very dregs of it, which brought him so low in his own apprehension, as if God had forsaken him; yet his divine nature did so uphold him, that he was able to bear it; whereby he hath made that cup milde and gentle to us: for all that belong unto him, must taste of this cup in this life. And as *Peter* saith, *If judgement first begins at the house of God, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God? and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?* If God gave this cup of trembling to his own dear Sonne, who was full of all good, surely then he will not spare us, that naturally are dry, barren and fruitles.

Wherefore, look narrowly to thy wayes, and walk circumspectly before thy God: for if thy sins and iniquities breaks upon thee, and thou continuest in them without repentance, God will put his cup of fury in thy hand, and thou must certainly drink it, which will

make

make thy heart to quake and tremble, when thou doeſt
Dan. 5. 5, taſt it; & King *Belſhazzars* countenance was changed,
6. and his thoughts troubled him, ſo that the joynts of his loynes were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another, when he did but ſee the hand-writing that was upon the wall againſt him: how much then wilt thou tremble, that muſt drink the dregs of this cup, if thou goeſt on ſtill in a rebellious way againſt God, without repentance. But if thou wilt ſeek the Lord betimes, and meet him by faith in Chriſt, and with a penitent heart, he will be found of thee, and this cup ſhall either paſſe from thee, or elſe it ſhall be tempered to thy ſtrength, that thou maieſt drink it with comfort.

If we look upon our Saviours bloody ſweat, we ſhall ſee the anguiſh of his ſoul, and with what violence the devil did aſſault him: thus terrible was his Agony, becauſe the great Dragon, that old ſerpent the devil did ſet upon him with all his power, and caſt his venomous and poyſoned darts to wound his very ſoul, if it had been poſſible, and to ſting him unto death. Though the devil, and his wicked inſtruments were ſuffered at laſt to take away his life; yet the venome of their malice could not hurt him: for as he lived an innocent Lamb without any ſpot, or ſtain of ſinne; ſo he died a ſacrifice without blemiſh, holy and acceptable to God, and by his death he did vanquiſh ſinne, which was the ſting of death, and by his reſurrection he did vanquiſh the devil, who had the power of death, and alſo he ſubdued all the power of wicked men, and perfectly finiſhed the whole work of mans redemption. In this Agony Chriſt found the burden of ſinne ſo heavy upon him, and the power of the devil ſo ſtrong againſt him, that his ſoul was heavy even to the death. What could be wanting to add ſorrow to his ſoul, when the great dragon of hell was unchained and let looſe upon him? yet by the power of his Deity he overcame him, though he were forced to a bloody ſweat.

If

If the beginning of our Saviours passion was thus bitter and painful to him, when he was in his full strength of body, how terrible was it afterwards, when his body was faint and weak, and his spirits almost spent? If the devil by his own power did thus afflict his soul, how was he afflicted, when his soul and body were tortured and tormented by the devil and his cruel instruments in his greatest weakness? Wherefore, if he did sweat drops of blood for our sakes, it is a shame for us to take no pains in his service for the advancement of his Name, and to suffer nothing for his glory? We can sweat abundantly about our pleasure, and profit, and about our affaires in this world; but we can feel no warmth of holy zeal in our affections toward him, neither will we take any pains about the affairs of the Kingdome of heaven. We will not suffer our own name, or credit to be blemished; but we hear the sacred Name of our blessed Redeemer dishonoured and blasphemed, we are not moved at it, but we can suffer it well enough. Also we can professe his Name when there is no opposition against it; but if clouds, or stormes of affliction and persecution do arise upon us for his sake, we are ready quickly to shrink from it: or if his enemies strike at him through our sides, we are then much troubled, and we can bear no smart for him, though he did sweat clots of blood for us. If this be our condition, if this be our love to our Redeemer, and our faithfulness to our Saviour, and if there be such cowardise in us, that we cannot stand for him, we do then discover too much ingratitude, and unthankfulness to our most loving and dear Saviour, and too much forgetfulness of his great goodness to us.

If we do wel consider how bitter Christ's Agony was to his very soul, it will stirre us up to magnifie him for his grace and goodness, and to express our thankfulness to his praise and glory by our piety in the duties of his worship and service, and by our works of love and charity.

rity to his Saints in their neceſſities. For if we comfort the comfortleſs, and relieve the needy according to our ability for his ſake, he will then comfort us when we are in any ſad condition: for he is the fountain of all true conſolation, and he knoweth by his own experience how great a burden it is to have a ſorrowful ſoul, according to this of the wiſe man, [t] *A wounded* Prov. 18. 14. *ſpirit who can bear?* But if we hope to find comfort in our griefs and ſorrows by ſecondary means without Chriſt, our hope will deceive us: and we cannot expect comfort from Chriſt, unleſſe we are truly ſenſible of the burden of our miſery, and that we have relation to him by faith: for nothing can comfort us without him. What true comfort can we have in our riches and honours, if we do not enjoy Chriſt with them, and if we have not made our peace with God by faith in him, and by our true repentance? What eaſe can the beſt Phyſick give us in our pains, or ſickneſs, if God doth not ſend the phyſitian, and alſo bleſs the Phyſick we take? Yea, What Angel can comfort us in the anguiſh of our ſouls, if God doth not ſend him to give us ſome aſſurance of his love to us in Chriſt? Though it be the will of God, that in ſickneſs we uſe the lawfull means of our health and recovery, and in our troubles to uſe the means of our comfort and deliverance; yet it is not his will that we ſhould reſt upon the means without him: but firſt we muſt have recourſe unto God, and with all humble reverence make known our ſtate and condition to him, and withall to crave his bleſſing upon the means we ſhall uſe according to our ſeveral neceſſities; and thus we ſhall receive from God what we deſire, or elſe what is better for us.

From hence alſo we may learn by the example of our gracious Saviour, to wait upon God for comfort in our ſorrows, and to be conſtant in our prayers, untill he ſhall be pleaſed to return us a gracious anſwer: for Chriſt

[r] Christ prayed three times in his Agony, before he had any answer from his heavenly Father; and as the bitterness of his Agony did increase, so the fervency and zeal of his prayers was stronger. But such is the weakness of our faith and confidence in God, that we are ready to give over waiting upon him, when we are in trouble, if he doth not send us help and succour when we expect it: neither can we with Christian constancy persevere in our prayers, if God doth not grant our requests at our own time, and according to our own desires; except he doth assist and strengthen us with his grace and holy Spirit. For it is Gods peculiar work to corroborate our minds, and to confirm our hearts with a settled resolution to rest and depend upon him in all our difficulties and dangers? otherwise we shall soon start aside at the fear of every temptation and trouble. Also, such is our security and carelessnesse, that we regard not the sorrows of the servants of God, we cannot mourn, though the Church of God be in great heavinesse through afflictions, we cannot watch, though we see eminent danger; our eyes are so dim and heavy, that we cannot see the judgements of God, that are upon a nation, or upon a people, [t] The disciples were asleep, when Christ was in this sharpe Agony, [u] *Jonas* was also fast asleep in the ship, when it was like to be broken with a mighty tempest. Thus are the best of Gods servants subject to the like infirmities and failings through the frailty of the flesh, which will sometimes prevail against the spiritual part that is in them.

[r] *Mat.* 26. 44.

[t] *Mat.* 26. 43.

[u] *Jon.* 1. 4, 5

Consider further, that as the first *Adam* lost that happinesse, which he had in his creation, in the garden of *Eden*, which was a place of as much pleasure, and delight, as the whole earth could afford; so the second *Adam* Christ Jesus our dear Saviour began his Passion in a garden, to repair our lost happinesse, whither Christ did often resort to refresh himself, and for his

own private devotions; and yet there the devil did seduce our first parents, and here also he did violently assault our blessed Redeemer, to cause the one to fall and sinne against God, and to hinder the other in the work of our redemption. Thus the devil layeth his traps and snares in our lawful pleasures and delights, to catch us at advantage, and to make us sinne against our God; and thus also he doth endeavour to hinder us in our holy devotions, and in any special work which God hath appointed us to do. How then can we be free from his evil suggestions? and how can we be secure from danger? Though we can be no where free from his temptations; yet we shall be preserved from the evil of them, if we keep close unto Christ by a true and sincere faith. Though the devil is most maliciously bent to do us hurt; yet Christ will restrain his power, that he shall not do so much as his malicious will desireth: w *for he will put an hook in his nose, and a bridle in his lips, to pull him back, that he shall not hurt our souls, though he may be permitted to afflict our bodies.*

w Isa. 37. 29.

Wherefore this is our singular comfort, that if the devill be any way too subtle, or too strong for us, Christ will give us heavenly wisdome to prevent his subtilty, and strength of grace to overcome his power. If the devil doth suggest into us fears and doubtings of our salvation to afflict our minds, to disquiet the peace of our consciences, or to perplex our souls, Christ will sweetly refresh and comfort us with more assurance thereof by faith. Also, if he doth call our sins to remembrance, and doth lay them before us with their several aggravations, to affright and terrifie us, and to drive us into despair, Christ will shew us the clots of blood which he did sweat in his Agony for our sakes, and the wounds that were made in his body, that our sins might be washed away in the blood that flowed from thence, and he will bid us put our finger by faith into the print of the nails, and thrust our hand into his

side,

ſide, that we may not be faithleſs, but faithful to beleeve that all this was done to our beloved Redeemer for our deliverance out of the bondage of ſinne and Satan, and for our eternal ſalvation: for Chriſt will not ſuffer any member of his myſtical body to be hurt, or wounded by the devill or wicked men to the anger of their ſouls. It is a great honour to us, if we are made conformable to our head Chriſt in his ſufferings: [x] *if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo raign with him.* Let the devil rage what he will; yet he can do nothing until his hour of permiſſion be come, and then he can do no more, but what Chriſt will ſuffer him to do, and that will be according to our ſtrength of grace, and not according to his malicious will and purpoſe.

[x] Rom. 8. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 12.

Concerning the fidelity of Peter, *and the treachery of* Judas.

NOw behold and ſee, how the ſorrows of our ſweet Saviour comes upon him [a] like *Jobs* meſſengers, and like the throws of a woman in travel: for no ſooner was he out of his ſharpe Agony, and bloody ſweat, and a little refreſht with the comfort of an Angel; but preſently [b] a band of rude and cruel ſouldiers ſent from the chief prieſt, and rulers of the Jewes, was ready at hand to apprehend him, and *Judas* one of his diſciples, who ſold him for a prey to the blood-thirſty Jews, was their guide to conduct them to the place were Jeſus was, and he gave them a ſign how they ſhould know him, and alſo a watch-word to hold him faſt. But when *Peter* ſaw that his dear Maſter was apprehended, and ready to be carried away by that baſe multitude; his love and zeal to him was ſo inflamed, that he did hazzard his own life in his cauſe, and he cut off the High-prieſts ſervants ear with his ſword in his maſters defence; but Chriſt rebuked him for it, ſaying, [c] *Put up again thy ſword into*

[a] Job. 2.

[b] Luk. 22.

[c] Mat. 26. Joh. 18.

his place: thinkest thou, that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of Angels? Yea, he was able by his own divine power to defend himself from them all: for by the power of his word his enemies were smitten to the ground. But to shew how ready he was to obey his heavenly Fathers will, and to finish the work of mans redemption, for which cause he was sent into the world, he did meekly as a Lamb, submit to his Fathers will, and suffer himself to be bound, and led away to *Annas* the High-priest.

Now we may see, that an holy and religious master may have a wicked, or ungodly servant, though the example of his own life, and his discipline in his family be pious and godly. [d] *Elisha* the Prophet had a covetous *Gehazi*. *Philemon* had an unfaithful and unprofitable *Onesimus*, until *Paul* did work upon him and convert him to the faith. So likewise a good servant doth sometimes dwell in the house of an irreligious and ungodly master. [e] *Potiphar* had a faithful and a chast *Joseph* in his house. *Naaman* had a vertuous maid in his family; and there were Saints in *Cesars* houshold, [f] who sent their salutations to the *Philippians*, Also, a godly and religious father hath oft times a wicked and ungracious son, *Adam* had a wicked *Cain*. *Noah* had a cursed *Cham*. *Abraham* had a scoffing *Ishmael*, *Isaac* had a profane *Esau*, and *David* also had an incestuous *Amnon*, and a rebellious *Absalom*: for good education and holy instructions cannot make children to be vertuous and godly, unless the holy Ghost doth season their hearts with grace.

d 2 King 5.

e Gen. 39. 2 King. 5.

f Phil. 4. 22.

If we settle and compose our thoughts to ruminate seriously upon these two disciples of Christ, we shall see the damnable treason of wretched *Judas*, and the couragious boldness of blessed *Peter*. Both of them did hear the heavenly doctrine that Christ preached; yet they were not alike edified by it: for it was as good seed sown

ſown in good ground to *Peter*, which brought forth fruit unto holineſs and righteouſneſs; but to *Judas* that good ſeed was ſown in barren ground: for his heart was ſtony, full of unbelief, and void of all grace and goodneſs, and could not receive it: the preaching of Chriſt was but as a bare ſound to his ear, which did not profit him to ſalvation; becauſe the holy Ghoſt did not ſpiritually bore his ear and convey it to his heart. They did alſo ſee the great miracles that Chriſt wrought; but they were not alike inſtructed by them: for *Peter* by the eye of his faith did thereby ſee his Deity, and did believe and confeſſe, that he was the Chriſt, the Son of the ever-living God; but *Judas* could ſee no more of Chriſt but his humane nature, though he might conceive him to be a great Prophet.

Theſe two Diſciples were like [g] the twins in *Rebeckahs* womb: [h] for God loved *Jacob*, but he hated *Eſau*; ſo Chriſt loved *Peter*, [i] but *Judas* was a devill. For the devill entred into him, and took poſſeſſion of his heart; and then he plotted and contrived how to betray his moſt gracious and loving Maſter, whom he knew to be blameleſſe, and free from any offence; and his treaſon was carried on in a moſt deceitful and malitious way againſt him: [k] for he betrayed him to the Rulers of the *Jewes* for a ſmall ſum of money, who were his deadly enemies, and ſought his life; and to colour his deviliſh miſchief, he betrayed him to the Souldiers with a kiſſe. Thus apt was *Judas* to learn any wickedneſſe in the devils ſchool; but he could learn no goodneſſe in the ſchool of Chriſt, though Chriſt himſelf was the ſchool-maſter. But ſuch was the faithfulneſs of *Peter* to his dear Lord, that he would not be danted at the band of Souldiers, neither would he ſhrink from him when he was in this danger, but did greatly jeopard his own life for his Maſters ſafety.

[g] Gen. 25. 23, 24. [h] Rom. 9. 13. [i] Joh. 6. 70. [k] Mat. 26. 15.

If it be ſo, that the devil teacheth wicked and ungodly men, to hide their miſchievous deſignes under ſome pretence

pretence of love and kindneſs, we ſhall hardly eſcape their ſnares: for we cannot tell what is intended under a fair ſhew of friendſhip, and we cannot be free from danger, when it lurketh ſo privily under plauſible pretences. *Abner* did not ſuſpect that *Joab* intended to kill him, [l] when he took him aſide in the gate to ſpeak with him quietly. *Joab* alſo ſaluted *Amaſa* with theſe kind words, [m] *Art thou in health my brother? and he took him by the beard with the right hand to kiſſe him, and then he ſmote him with his ſword, and he died.* [n] Thus treacherouſly did *Abſalom* kill his brother *Ammon*, when he invited him to a feaſt in his own houſe. The Diſciples did little think that *Judas* betrayed his Maſter when he came and ſaluted him with a kiſs; but Chriſt knew it, who is the ſearcher of all hearts, and none but he could know it; for he knew what he had done with the Rulers, what compact and bargain he had made with them, and what he did further purpoſe and intend to doe, and therefore he ſaid unto him, [o] *Judas, betrayeſt thou the Son of man with a kiſſe?* Thus ſaith a reverent Divine; It is a ſpecial cunning of the devill, and it is full of danger, to put a ſmiling, and an alluring countenance upon his baits, as he doth by his temptations of profit and gain, which, like unſeen bullets, wound and kill before they are diſcerned; or like the viper, that, putting us to no pain, brings us into a pleaſing ſlumber of ſecurity, which endeth in the dead ſleep of death and condemnation. For proſperity and worldly allurements hide hoſtility under the pretence of friendſhip, and makes us love the weapons that hurt us, and to refuſe the meanes whereby we may be cured; and theſe make conqueſt not onely of our power and ſtrength, but alſo of our hearts, wills, and affections, and they retain us in a voluntary ſervitude, having no deſire to come out of this pleaſing bondage, or to recover our liberty, though the meanes be offered to us. This is the policy, and ſubtle cunning of the devil, to beguile poor

[l] 2 Sam. 3. 27.
[m] 2 Sam. 20. 9, 10.
[n] 2 Sam. 13. 28, 29.
[o] Luke 22. 48.

poor ſoules with ſuch fair pretences; for in their ſmiles and fawnings he doth ſecretly attempt their ruine and deſtruction.

Conſider further, p that when Jeſus ſent forth his twelve Diſciples to preach, he gave unto them all power againſt unclean ſpirits, to caſt them out, to heal all manner of ſickneſs, and all manner of diſeaſe, to cleanſe the lepers, and to raiſe the dead; they had freely received theſe gifts of him, and therefore they ſhould freely diſpenſe them. *Judas* had the ſame power, and received the ſame gifts with the reſt of the Diſciples; but becauſe his heart was not ſeaſoned with ſanctifying grace, though he did cure others, yet he could not cure himſelf, and though q he did preach to others, yet he himſelf was a caſt-away: he had the gift of preaching, but not the grace of preaching; he had faith to work miracles, but not the grace of faith unto juſtification, and to reſt and confide in Chriſt for his ſalvation.

p Mat. 10. 1, 8.

q 1 Cor. 9. 27.

Theſe gifts of the holy Ghoſt are ſometimes given to unregenerate men, and yet they are no whit neerer to the Kingdome of Heaven. Wherefore let no man reſt ſecure of his ſalvation, becauſe he hath ſuch excellent gifts; for except the holy Ghoſt doth conferre ſanctifying grace with his gifts, they will not be effectuall to ſalvation. We may have the gift of prayer, of temperance, of continency, of patience, and of all morall vertues; and yet if we have not the grace of prayer, that we can pray in faith, and the grace of all other vertues, as being the fruits of faith, they will not be acceptable to God, nor profitable to us for the ſalvation of our ſoules. Wherefore if God hath given us the gifts of his Spirit, and the meanes of grace, we ought to uſe his gifts to his glory, and to improve the meanes of grace for the ſanctifying of his gifts unto us, that we may be built up to eternal life.

Let this be our daily ſtudy, and conſtant care, to inrich

inrich our ſoules with true ſaving grace, and then the devill cannot ſo eaſily undermine us, and we ſhall be ſo watchful over our wayes, that no iniquity ſhall cleave to our ſoules. For if the devill can faſten any one ſin upon us, he will ſoon link another ſin to that, and will draw us on from ſin to ſin, untill they make a ſtrong chain, which will pull us down into the pit of deſtruction, unleſſe we break every link of this chain with true repentance.

Alſo, if we be thus watchful, it will keep us from ſecurity, and from preſuming upon our own ſtrength in [p] Pſa. 119. 37. times or places of danger, [r] and we ſhall turn our eyes from beholding vanity, and refuſe the falſe favours which the world doth promiſe us: for the fear of God will be alwayes before our eyes, and then we may be [q] Pſa. 91. 11 confident, [s] that *God will give his Angels charge over us, to keep us in all our wayes*, leſt at any time we daſh our feet againſt a ſtone, or leaſt we ſtumble at thoſe [s] Mat. 26. 41. blocks which the devill layeth in our way. [t] Chriſt hath commanded us, to *watch and pray, that we enter not into* [u] Eph. 6. 13. *temptation*; [u] and he hath given us ſpiritual armour, and weapons of defence, which we muſt take unto our ſelves, that we may be able to reſiſt in the evill day: [w] Pſa 58. 5. Let us learn [w] the wiſdome of the Serpent, by ſtopping our eares againſt their charming perſwaſions, and by ſuſpecting moſt their malicious attempts, when with greateſt ſhew of love they ſmile and fawn upon us.

We muſt now conſider by the example of *Judas*, that unleſſe the Spirit of God doth accompany the uſe of all his holy Ordinances, we may outwardly partake of them, but we ſhall not inwardly be edified by them, neither ſhall we find any ſpiritual conſolation in the uſe of them, becauſe there is no efficacious working of the holy Ghoſt in our hearts: the outward man may be affected for the preſent, but the inward man cannot be edified: for there will be no illumination

wrought

wrought in the underſtãding to conceive rightly of heavenly things, no true conformity in the will to the will of God, no holy zeal in the heart and affections, and no pious Reformation will be wrought in the life and converſation. * *All men have not faith,* (as ſaith the Apoſtle) *all men do not profit by the meanes of ſalvation,* * 2 Theſ. 3. 2. *and all men are not edified by the preaching of the Word of God.* We may joyn with the Congregation in hearing, in praying, in ſinging of Pſalmes; ſome ſhall receive comfort and inſtruction, others ſhall receive no benefit thereby: we may alſo partake with them in the Lords Supper, and we may feed our bodies with the outward Elements in that Sacrament; but we ſhall never feed and nouriſh our ſouls to eternal life with that ſpirituall Grace which is ſignified by them, except our hearts are prepared to receive it through the ſanctification of the Spirit; we may eat and drink the Bread and Wine, but we cannot eat and drink the Body and Blood of Chriſt, but onely by faith: our ſouls may languiſh and ſtarve for want of heavenly food and nouriſhment, if the milk of Gods word and this ſpirituall food be not conveyed to our hearts by faith, as it is to the ear and to the hand by the Miniſter; alſo if the holy Ghoſt doth not give us a ſpirituall appetite to it, that our hearts may ſpiritually feed upon it, it will not be the ſweet ſavour of life unto life unto us; but rather the ſavour of death unto death.

If the devill can bereave us of the benefites that come by the meanes of Grace, and make us loſe the opportunity of it, and can keep us from the true knowledge of God, and of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, as he did *Judas*; he will then lead us on in a ſinful and wicked courſe of life, until he doth bring us to eternal perdition. Thus by degrees he brought *Judas* from infidelitie to hardneſs of heart after he had taken poſſeſſion of him, until at laſt he fell into deſpair, and became his own executioner for his damnable treaſon

againſt his Lord and Maſter: for preſentlie after he
[y] Act. 1.18. hanged himſelf, [y] *he burſt aſunder in the midſt, and all his bowels guſhed out.* Thus did God give him his juſt reward for his horrible ſin and impiety againſt Chriſt, and yet he was one of his Diſciples, and had as much means of grace as the reſt had, and alſo as many common and external giſts of the Spirit, as they had, and did ſee the great works that Chriſt had done: And thus will God ſhew his juſtice and judgements upon impenitent and notorious offenders, that are ſo hardned in their ſins, that no meanes of Grace can bring them to Repentance.

Now examine thy ſelf, thou that dailie ſeeſt the wonderful works of God, if thou canſt look beyond nature, and ſee his power and wiſe providence in them; if thou canſt diſcern the finger of God, when great men are brought down, and men of low degree are exalted; alſo, if thou canſt ſee how God will bring to paſs his own deſigns againſt all oppoſition of wicked men, and that he can diſcover the helliſh plots and maginations of the
[z] Pſal. 7.15. Devil and his inſtruments, [z] and will *make them fall into*
[a] Eſth. 1.10. *the ſame pit, which they have digged for others,* [a] as he did unto wicked *Haman.* If thou ſeeſt theſe and the like things come to paſs, thou muſt believe that it is the work of God for his own glory and the good of his Church. *Peter* did ſee the great works of Chriſt, & he did believe that they were wrought by the power of his divine nature. *Judas* did alſo ſee the ſame works, but he could not diſcern the divinity of Chriſt in them. If thy condition be like unto that of *Peter*, that thou canſt ſee a divine power in the great works that are wrought here upon earth, and that God by his wiſdom and providence can diſpoſe of all the troubleſome chances and changes that happen here, either in Church, or State, to his own glory, to the good of his people, and to the confuſion of his and their enemies; then thou doeſt rightlie underſtand the waies of God by a ſpiritual illumination

that is in thy heart. But if with *Judas* thou canſt no diſcern Gods divine power in his works on earth, to over-rule all adverſarie power, [b] *though they rage in fury, and take counſel together againſt the Lord and againſt his anointed*; then thine underſtanding is blinded, and thou lieſt open to all kind of dangers, and diſtractions of mind.

[b] Pſal. 2. 2.

Search again into thine own heart, thou that liveſt where the Goſpel of Chriſt is ſincerely preached, and his holie Sacraments rightlie and duly adminiſtered, and examine thy ſelf with what affections thou doeſt come to thoſe holie Ordinances of God, what grace is wrought in thee, and how thy faith is ſtrengthened by them, how much ſin is weakned, and how thy life is reformed. Alſo, examine what ſpiritual life thou haſt, what fruits it doth bring forth, what care thou haſt to nouriſh it by thy profitable hearing of the Word of God, and by thy worthy receiving of the Lords Supper: if thou canſt give a good account, that thou haſt ſpent thy time profitably, and haſt improved the means of grace to the beſt advantage; then thou art a faithful ſervant to thy Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt, as *Peter* was. But if this heavenlie food will not pleaſe thy palate, it cannot nouriſh and comfort thy ſoul, becauſe thou haſt ſome ſecret corruptions, or ſome beloved ſin that keeps the ſweet influence of grace from thy heart, and then thou wilt reap as little benefit by the Word of God, and by his holie Ordinances, as wretched *Judas* did, though he heard Chriſt himſelf preach to him. Surely, God doth ſtill ſend down this heavenlie Manna (bleſſed be his holie name for it) and thou maieſt gather it for the nouriſhment and comfort of thy ſoul, if thou wilt; but if thou canſt find no ſpiritual ſweetneſs in it, thy taſte is not then ſpiritual, but it is dulled with worldly cares, or ſinful pleaſures, which muſt be purged out of thy heart by the blood of Chriſt, before thou canſt with *Peter* take pleaſure and delight to hear the words

John 6.68 of Christ, [c] which are the words of eternall life, and before thou canst make it the joy of thy heart to meditate on the Statutes of God. How canst thou hazard thy life for Christ, as *Peter* did, and for the truth of his Gospel, if thou art not well instructed, and a good proficient in his School? And how canst thou live a spirituall life to God, if thy heart hath not sucked vertue and power from Christ by faith, who is the fountain of this water of life, and of this cœlestial food to nourish thee up to everlasting life.

Look now a little upon *Peters* zeal for his Masters safety, he resisted those that came to apprehend him, [d] and *smote the high Priests servant*; but Christ cured the wound, and rebuked *Peter* for it, because his zeal was not well grounded: for, he did endeavour to hinder him in the work, which God had appointed him to do concerning mans redemption, and therefore Christ said unto him, *The cup which my father hath given me shall I not drink it?* This may teach us, to drink willingly any cup of affliction that our heavenly Father shall give us: for it must needs be good and profitable to us, if we receive it from God, as from the hand of our Father. Also, that holy zeal, or fervency of spirit in Gods Cause is a duty which he requireth, and his servants do practise it; yet it must be regulated according to knowledge, and to the glory of God: for blind zeal will lead us into many errours. *Davids* zeal was rightly regulated, [e] *My zeal*, saith he, *hath consumed me, because thine enemies have forgotten thy words.* [f] Such was the zeal of *Phinehas* in the matter of *Zimri* and *Cozby*, which turned away the wrath of God from the children of *Israel*, *And therefore God gave to him and to his seed after him his covenant of peace, even the covenant of an everlasting Priesthood.* If we have this holy zeal and fervency of spirit in our Prayers, and in all other services that we perform unto God, he will hear them, and will graciously accept them, and return us a blessed answer

[d] John 18. 10, 11.

[e] Psal. 119. 139.

[f] Num. 25. 11, 12.

in

in due time. 6 When Christ had rebuked the *Laodi-* [f] Rev. 3. 19
ceans for their lukewarmneſſe, he doth counſell them to be zealous and to amend: for this fire of holy zeal will take away the coldneſſe of our affections in our Prayers, Meditations, Thankſgivings, and in all other our holy duties to God. This is one end of our Redemption by Christ: for *Paul* ſaith, [h] That *Christ* [h] Tit. 2. 14.
gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himſelf a peculiar people zealous of good works. But there is a zeal that comes from a blinde devotion, which will eaſily miſlead us. [i] *Paul* did con- [i] Rom. 10. 2, 3.
feſſe that the Jews had a zeal of God, but it was not according to knowledge: for they went about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſſe by the Law, becauſe they were ignorant of the righteouſneſſe of God, which was by Christ

Wherefore ſtudy and labour for heavenly wiſedome, and ſpirituall underſtanding to carry thy zeal the right way, and to regulate it with an holy diſcretion, that it may not exceed the bounds of Chriſtian moderation; but that it may be ſteered according to the will of God and to his glory, and not according to thy paſſions, or to a wrong end. If there be an holy zeal in thy prayers, they will ſpeedily mount up to God, and be quick meſſengers to return thee a gracious anſwer from him; whereas cold and dull prayers aſcend up heavily to God and they will as ſlowly return with a bleſſing. So likewiſe, this holy zeal will put life into all thy devotions and duties to God, to make thee perform them with a willing minde, and a chearfull heart.

Now look once more upon the treaſon of *Judas*, and ſee if ever there was the like treachery plotted, or the like horrible fact committed upon earth, and all for baſe gain: it was plotted by the devill againſt the eternall ſon of God, and acted by *Judas*, his accurſed inſtrument againſt his moſt gracious Lord and Maſter; his heart was ſo ſet upon covetouſneſſe, that he loſt his ſoul

for the gain of a little mony: What did *Judas* now ge by his bargain? What gain did he make by exchanging his ſoul with the devill for money? this was his gain, the horrour of a guilty conſcience, becauſe he betrayed innocent bloud, a reprobate minde that could not repent, and the fearfull terrours of deſperation, which made him hang himſelf.

Conſider therefore how far earthly minded men will indanger their ſouls for the wealth of this world. It is [k] 1 Tim. 6. 10. true which *Paul* ſaith, [k] that *covetouſneſſe is the root of all evill*; not in regard of the things coveted: for in themſelves they are the bleſſings of God, which he hath given us, and hath appointed them to be uſed to his glory; but in regard of the immoderate deſire of them, the unlawfull meanes that is commonly uſed to get them, and the wrong end for which they are ſo eagerly deſired; but chiefly becauſe they ſteal away their hearts from God: for they ſet their hearts upon them, and prize them above heavenly riches, they ſtick not to get them by oppreſſion, or fraud, and they covet them to ſatisfie their own luſts, and not to honour God with them; they do not think that the guilt of their covetouſneſſe cleaveth cloſe to their ſouls, and that there is a ſting in their gettings, which will ſting their ſouls to death, as it did *Judas*.

God doth allow us to get gain by honeſt meanes in our lawfull callings, that he may be honoured thereby, that we may live comfortably to do him ſervice, and maintain the charge that God hath given us, and alſo to be able to ſuccour and relieve the poor.

But if we covet riches for any end that is diſhonour- [l] 1 Tim. 1. 19. able to God, or get them by any unlawfull meanes, [l] we do then make ſhipwrack of faith and a good conſcience; we truſt in our wealth, and not in God; and thus we do voluntarily ſuffer our covetous deſires to tyrannize over us, untill they bring us to perdition. How happy then is that heart which is not affected to it? how peaceable

is

is that conſcience which is not infected with it? and how comfortable will our lives be to us, if we can reſt content with that portion which God hath given us by our induſtry in our honeſt callings? we ſhall live without carking care, which otherwiſe in time will eat out our ſpirits, and conſume our bodies; we ſhall ſleep without trouble of minde, and though we poſſeſſe but little, yet we ſhall injoy the bleſſing of God with it, which will make that little far better to us, than to poſſeſſe much, and not to have his bleſſing therewith. Alſo many rich men have great ſtore of wealth, and yet they injoy but litle of it, becauſe they have not an heart to uſe it: but they hide it as in a napkin, like that unprofitable ſervant in the Goſpel; ſo that God hath no glory, themſelves have no content, and others have no good by their great wealth.

If we bring *Peter* and *Judas* face to face, the one will appear more beautifull and the other more deformed, and we ſhall the better diſcern the faithfulneſſe and piety of the one, and the infidelity and wickedneſſe of the other; the zeal of *Peter* to his beloved Lord and Maſter, and the damnable treachery of *Judas* againſt him: the one ſought to ſave his Maſters life, the other to deſtroy it, though both of them were brought up in the ſame ſchool. When vertue is ſet oppoſite to vice, vertue will ſhine forth the more clearly, and vice will be the more ugly. *Pilate* gave the *Jewes* their choice of *Jeſus* or of *Barrabas*; but they choſe *Barrabas* the murtherer, and rejected Jesus, whom they could no way convince of any crime, which made their hatred and malice againſt Chriſt the more odious and deteſtable to all poſterity.

Look now with the eye of admiration upon thy gracious and bleſſed Saviour, how willing he was to drink that cup of trembling, which his Father gave him, whereof he had a taſte immediatly before, which put him into ſuch an Agony, that his ſoul was heavy even to the death

death, and his ſweat was like drops of blood; but now he muſt drink the dregs of it for us, and in our ſtead: for he knew that we were not able to bear it, Chriſt knew that *Iudas* would ſeek him that night in the garden to betray him, and that he would bring a band of ſouldiers to apprehend him; and yet Chriſt would not abſent himſelf to avoid it, neither would he uſe the power of Angels for his defence, nor his own Divine Power to keep him from their fury and rage: for though by the power of his word they were ſmitten to the ground; yet he ſuffered them to riſe again, and he did voluntarily put himſelf into their hands, to lead him away whither they would. Thus meekly did Chriſt ſubmit to his Fathers will: for he was not of *Elijahs* fiery ſpirit, [m] who called for *fire from heaven, which conſumed two captains, and their fifties, whom king Ahaziah ſent to apprehend him.* The Diſciples that were at *Ceſarea* beſought *Paul* with many teares, not to go up to *Jeruſalem*, becauſe *Agabus* had Propheſied that there he ſhould be bound, and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles; yet *Paul* would not be perſwaded: but like a true Diſciple of Chriſt, he anſwered them thus: [n] *What do ye mean to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound onely, but alſo to dye at Jeruſalem for the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Look alſo upon the admirable mildeneſſe of Chriſt, who gave theſe friendly and familiar words to that wicked traitor, when he came to betray him, [o] *Friend, Wherefore art thou come?* And again he ſaid, [p] *Iudas, betrayeſt thou the Son of Man with a kiſſe?* Theſe milde and gracious words might have mollified his obdurate heart, and touched his conſcience with remorſe, if [q] God had not given him over to a reprobate minde. This is to teach us meekneſſe of ſpirit, when our ſuppoſed friends prove treacherous, and when our kindneſſe is ſpitefully rewarded: for we are commanded by Chriſt himſelf, [r] to *bleſſe them that curſe us*, to *love our enemies*, to *do good to them*

m 2 Kings 1.

n Acts 21. 13.

o Mat. 26 50

p Luk. 22. 44.

q Rom. 1. 28

r Mat. 5. 48.

them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us: As Christ gave us this in precept so likewise he gave it us by his own example.

But this Doctrine is unpleasing to our corrupted nature, and we cannot hear it, unlesse Christ doth endow us with his Spirit of meeknesse.

By the example of these two Disciples, we may examine the condition of our own hearts, whether there is the seed of grace in us to make us faithfull to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we can stick close to him with *Peter*, whatsoever we shall suffer for his sake; or the seed of hypocrisie, which reacheth onely to the profession of his Name, when there is no opposition against it, and when it may stand with their own profit and advantage: for troubles and persecution will make an hypocrite forsake Christ, and hope of lucre will make him change his profession of him, as it did *Judas*. We may also learn from hence, That to live in a religious family is not sufficient to make a good servant, and to injoy the meanes of grace is not sufficient to mak a faithfull Disciple of Christ, except the holy Ghost doth change the heart and affections from their sinfull condition to an holy conformity to the will of God.

Wherefore let this be the Meditation of our hearts, to expresse the truth of our graces by our faithfulnesse unto Christ in all our sufferings for him: Also, so to live in a religious family, and so to improve the meanes of grace, that some gracious operations of the holy Ghost may be seen upon our hearts and affections by the purity of our lives and conversations.

What Christ *suffered under* Caiaphas.

WHen Christ was apprehended they brought him bound to *Caiaphas* the high Priest, as if he had been a Malefactor, where he was examined. *spit *Mat. 26.

upon, buffeted, smitten, derided, and most spitefully used; they sought false witnesses against him, but found none that did agree one with another: notwithstanding he opened not his mouth to complain, or to clear his own innocency, that this propheſie of him might be fulfilled, [b] *He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

[b] Isa. 53. 7.

His own Nation the *Jews* did offer those blasphemous indignities to him: for they were ever a rebellious and stiffe-necked people, [c] which made the Lord so much, and so often to complain of them by his Prophets, and they were still maliciously bent against them, because they rebuked them of their sins and rebellions against God; whereby we may see how neer it comes unto God himself, when his own People, and they that profesſe his Name, prove disobedient and rebellious to him.

[c] Ezech. 2.

But they could find no fault with Christ, [d] they could not convince him of any sin, there was no guile ever found in his lips; he did miraculously feed the hungry, he cured the diseased, he cleansed the lepers, he cast out the devils, he observed the Ceremonies of the Law, and paid his tribute unto *Cæsar*; and yet their rage and malice against him was full of cruelty, because he laid open their grosse hypocrisie, and condemned their vain traditions, and because he discovered the unfaithfulness of their hearts, and the evil of their wayes. Such was the wilful blindness of their Rabbies, that they would not know Christ, nor acknowledge him to be the Messiah that was promised, though his doctrine was most pure and powerful, and his life sutable thereunto, though he had wrought many great miracles among them, and though most of their Prophets had so plainly fore-told of him, which was fulfilled in their dayes; for they stumbled at his low condition of life, and could not see the excellencies and great worth that was in him.

[d] Joh. 8. 46.

Though

Though the wicked *Jews* did use opprobrious words, and blasphemous speeches against our sweet Saviour, and though they did disdainfully abuse him, and unjustly sought matter against him by false witnesses, that they might accuse him before the Romane Governour to put him to death; yet he did shew divine patience, and gave not the least word of offence to his enemies, notwithstanding they did thus strongly provoke him to it. If we doe well consider this, it will teach us, by the example of our gracious Saviour, how to demean our selves, when we are under the like sufferings.

Also, it will keep us humble minded and lowly, not to be puffed up with spiritual pride, as the high Priest was; for then we shall give the devil great advantage against us; he will blind our understandings, that we cannot rightly discern that which is holy and just, and he will infect our hearts with hypocrisie, so that others shall be seduced, and beguiled by our outward shew of godlinesse, whereas there is no sincerity in our hearts, and at last our feigned holinesse will be discovered, [e] because we content our selves with a form of godliness, and regard not to have the power of it in our lives and conversations. Who were so proud of their outward holiness as the Scribes and Pharisees? Who were greater hypocrites, and did deceive more with their seeming sanctity than they? And who were more cruelly and maliciously set against Christ, Gods Annointed, than they? Wherefore we ought to be very careful to keep down that high mindedness, which we are prone unto, if we are in any eminent place of authority in Church or State, or if we have any gifts or endowments of the Spirit above other men: [f] for *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble*; lest hereupon the divel draw us into his snares, to dissemble with God, in the profession of his Name, and also with men, in our dealings with them. We ought therefore to look well to the integrity of our hearts: [g] for God will be well pleas-

[e] 2 Tim. 3. 5.

[f] 1 Pet. 5. 5.

[g] Psal. 51. 6.

ed, if he findeth truth and sincerity in the inward parts, though there may be weaknesses and failings in the performance of our duties to him. Hence it was, that Christ did commend *Nathanael*, because there was no guil found in him.

Now look upon thy beloved Saviour for thy instruction, and behold how meekly the Lamb of God standeth among those ravenous wolves, who sought to devour him. Doth not thy conscience tell thee, that the guilt of thy sins was as fewell to kindle their rage, and to maintain the fire of their fury against him? wert not thou some part of the occasion that he suffered such disgrace, such ignominy, and such blasphemous reproaches as were cast upon him? If thy sins had no relation to Christ in his sufferings, thou canst have no benefit thereby: if thou dost not firmly believe that the guilt of thy sins was imputed unto Christ, and that he suffered for thy sake, as well as for all the Elect of God, his righteousnesse cannot be imputed to thee, his sufferings will profit thee nothing, and thou canst have no good assurance that thy sins are washt away in his blood: i *but thou hast eaten the sower grapes, and his teeth were set on edge, thou hast committed the trespasse, and he hath suffered the punishment, that by his stripes thou maist be healed.* Wherfore thou hast no means to be justified by the righteousnesse of Christ, and to have the remission of thy sins by the merit of his blood, but by faith in him, if thou canst apply him to thy self; also without faith in Christ the wrath of God cannot be turned away from thee, and thou canst not comfortably rest upon his promises for thy salvation.

i Ezech. 18. 2.

Christ doth here teach thee meekness of spirit, when thou art unjustly accused, spitefully reviled, and shamefully used; he doth also teach thee patience, when thou art in trouble, or in any necessity: for he suffered farre more in thy nature to be an example to thee of meekness, and of patience, and to sanctifie all thy sorrows

and sufferings to thee. Wherefore let not thy love to him be abated, because of his troubles; but rather increase it the more, because he suffered for thy sake, and for thy good: also, let not thy confidence in him be weakened; because he is now going to *Golgotha*, which is an uncomfortable place to flesh and blood, and be not thou disheartned if thou must go the same way, and must follow him in the same steps, and to the same place, for Christ is gone before to sanctifie both the way and the place to thee, and to take away the bitternesse of all thy troubles and crosses; and therefore if thou wilt not go up after him to Mount *Calvary*, thou art not worthy to ascend up into heaven to him. Wherefor labour for Christian fortitude, and an holy resolution, that when troubles, sorrowes, or calamities do come upon thee, thy minde may not be dismayed with fear, nor thy heart faint with grief, if thou must drink of these bitter waters of affliction for his sake.

Consider now, [k] that Jesus plainly told the high priest, that he was the Christ, the Son of God, and that they should see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven; whereupon the indignation of the high priest was such, that he rent his clothhs, he accused him of blasphemy, and judged him to be worthy of death. His proud spirit could not endure to hear such great things of so poor and silly a man as he conceived Christ to be; but he was transported beyond the bounds of sound judgement with a kinde of blinde zeal, or rather with furious hatred against Christ: for he would not believe his report; though he had declared himself so plainly to him; according to this of the Prophet, [l] *Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* This Prophesie of Christ was at this very time fulfilled, for now he was brought into such troubles, and into such danger of his life, that none believed what the Prophets had reported of him, or what he did speak

[k] Mar. 14. 62.

[l] Isa. 53. 1. John 12. 38.

of himself, his Divine Power was clouded from them, he was as a man not able to help himself, and his own Disciples staggered in their faith of him at this time. This doth often shake the faith of the best of Gods servants, when they see the rage of the wicked, the perills and dangers that do round beset them, and no power appearing to deliver them; because God doth not reveal the strength of his arm for their help and succour.

May we not now justly admire at the incredulity that was in the high Priests heart, and at the blindnesse of his understanding, who would neither believe the words of Christ, nor understand the ancient Propheſies, which he knew were then to be fulfil'ed concerning the Messiah that was promised, which did exactly agree with Christ, and could agree with no other? but the saying of the
[m] Isa. 6 9, 10. Prophet was fulfilled in him, [m] *Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed but understand not: and see ye indeed, but per-*
[n] Mat. 13. 14, 15. *ceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their eares heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, & hear with their eares and understand with their hearts, and*
[o] Zech. 11. 13. *convert and be healed.* [n] The Propheſie, that he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver, and that a potters field should be bought with that money, was fulfilled before his eyes, and yet he would not believe. Also, *Isaiahs*
[p] Isa. 53. 3. Propheſie of Christ was fulfilled at that very time: [o] for then *he was despised and rejected of men, they hid their faces from him, and esteemed him not*: and yet he would not believe. He could not be ignorant what great works Christ had wrought, and how powerfull his Preaching was, and yet he would not believe, but rather this did increase his malice and fury against him. The Priests and Elders expected a temporall king to deliver them out of their subjection to the Romanes, but when they saw Christ in so mean a condition, they were offended
[q] 1 Cor. 1. 23. in him and refused him, according to this of *Paul*, [p] that *Christ crucified was a stumbling block unto the Jewes*

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and foolishnesse unto the Greeks. If *Caiaphas* had rightly understood the Prophets, he would have applied their Propheſies unto Christ, that he came not to deliver them from the Romanes; but to deliver them out of the bondage of sin and Satan; also, he had then understood by the words of Christ, that he was both the Son of God, and the Son of Man, and though he stood before him in a contemptible manner, and though his enemies did then insult over him; yet they, even they should hereafter see him sit in his humane nature at the right hand of God, and also coming in the clouds of heaven at the last day to judge both the quick and the dead. But he had no spirituall eye to discern the Divinity of Christ in this his despicable condition, and he had no believing heart to give credite to his words, though they were the words of truth, and of eternall life; but he made them an occasion of his death: for presently upon this he delivers him up to *Pilate* the Romane Magistrate, to be put to death for a blasphemer, for the Regall Scepter was now taken from *Judah*, and they had no power to put any man to death.

Here Meditate with pious affections upon the boundlesse mercy and bountifull goodnesse of God in offering grace to all: Christ preacheth salvation even to those that did seek his life, he revealeth unto them that were his deadly foes the greatest mystery that ever was, to wit, the incarnation of the eternall Son of God, the exaltation of his humane nature, and his glorious triumphing over all his enemies, both spirituall and temporall at his second coming, which will be at the great day of judgement. 9. *This is the great mystery of godlinesse: God manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory;* But behold and see the ingratitude of most men, who will not receive the glad tidings of salvation, though it be brought home to their houses, except they may have it on their own conditions; if they, 9 1 Tim. 3. 16.

may

may ſtill injoy the pleaſures and vanities of the world, their carnall delights and boſome ſins, they are willing to imbrace it; but if they muſt part with theſe, and muſt have it with croſſes, troubles, perſecutions and torments, and with ſuch like incumbrances, they are willing then to be without it. Proud men will not receive the Goſpell of peace of ſuch as are of no eſteem, or reputation, and *Caiaphas* will not receive the meanes of grace from Chriſt himſelf, nor learn the way to ſalvation of him; becauſe he was in bands, and his ſpirituall pride would not ſuffer him to hearken to the heavenly doctrine of Chriſt, as he was now in this ſad condition, becauſe he conceived him to be a man of no extraordinary gifts, or endowments.

But be thou, O my ſoul, alwayes ready and prepared to receive the Goſpel of ſalvation with all humbleneſſe of mind, meekneſs of ſpirit, and with hearty and pure affections, whenſoever, or howſoever it be brought to theee from Chriſt: for this heavenly liquor coming from Chriſt, may be as wholſome as comfortable and as profitable, if it be brought in an earthen Pitcher as in a ſilver Cup, ſo that it be purely tempered, and that the holy Ghoſt doth joyn in the adminiſtration of it, to bring it cloſe home to all thy ſpirituall diſeaſes, that by faith in Chriſt thou maiſt be cured. If the Goſpel of Chriſt be ſincerely preached, thou wilt find it full of heavenly comforts, and of holy directions for a pious life and converſation: *for *it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for inſtruction in righteouſneſſe, that thou maiſt be perfect and throughly furniſhed unto all good works.* If thou doeſt eſteem of it according to the condition, or quality of him that brings it, and not according to its own worth, or the honour and majeſty of him that ſends it, thou doeſt then too much undervalue it, and doſt diſhonour God himſelf that ſendeth it: For God hath wrought mighty things by weak meanes, *he hath choſen the foolish things of the world to confound the wiſe, and the weak things of the world*

*2 Tim. 3. 16.

*1 Cor. 1. 27.

to

to confound the things which are mighty. Also, [c] *He hath chosen the poor of this world to make them rich in faith and in grace:* for grace is the true riches of the soul, and this is the wealth which is most to be desired. When God works great things by small means, he is then most to be glorified. [n] God brought down *Gideons* Army of two and thirty thousand to three hundred, that he might have the honour of the overthrow of the *Midianites*, that *Israel* might not vaunt themselves against him, saying, *Mine own hand hath saved me.* The Apostles of Christ did many mighty works by their Ministerie, though most of them were but poor Fishermen: for they did not work by their own strength, but they had their power and abilities from Christ: [m] *for they were his Ambassadors, and the word of Reconciliation was committed to them.*

[c] Jam. 2. 5.

[n] Judg. 7. 2.

[m] 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.

Peters *denial of* CHRIST.

CONsider now by *Peters* example, how weak the dearest of Gods Servants are, if he doth leave them to their own strength, and how unable they are to resist any temptation, if the Devil be permitted to assault them, and if God doth with-draw his assisting Grace from them in their temptation. For though *Peter* but a few hours before, did stoutly oppose a Band of Souldiers in his Masters defence to the hazzard of his own life; yet now he is surprised with sudden fear through the subtiltie of the Devil, which did greatly shake and endanger his Faith. We may very well conceive that it was not barely the words of the High Priests servants, that made *Peter* fall so fearfullie, [a] as to deny his Lord and Master three several times, and that with bitter execrations, seeing he loved him so dearlie, and did so faithfullie promise, *not to forsake him, though he should die with him.* But the Devil put a sting into their words, which did strike *Peter* with deadlie fear, that he should be brought into the like troubles, as his Master

[a] Mat. 26. 69.

was then in, and also into danger of his life: without doubt the Devil did use all means to aggravate these feares in *Peter* by his suggestions; to make him forget his former promise, and to abjure his beloved Master. For doubtlesse he did suggest unto him, That if Christ were the Son of God, then surelie God would not suffer him to be thus shamefullie intreated; or if Christ were able to help himself, he would not endure such ignominy and such blasphemies to be cast upon him; and if he could not deliver himself, then *Peter* would bring himself into many perils and dangers, if he did acknowledge that he was one of his Disciples, and the Priests and Elders would use him far worse than they did his Master: Also, if Christ had not some way or other offended, though *Peter* did not know it, the Priests and Elders would not be so cruellie bent against him. These, or the like suggestions the Devil did probably cast into *Peters* mind, to increase his fears, to weaken his faith, and to overthrow that confidence which he had in Christ.

Thus the sting of that old Serpent went along with the words of a silly damosel, which *Peter* did not suspect, and they entered so deep into him, that they poysoned his heart with unbelief, and made him to denie that he was a follower of Jesus, and also he began to curse and swear that [a] *he knew him not*, [b] though Christ had told him, *that Satan desired to sift him as wheat, and that he should thrice deny him before the Cock did crow*, which was to make him the more watchful over his words, and the more careful of himself; yet he did dangerously fall from his dear Lord and Master, and he had not recovered himself, if Christ had not prayed for him, that his faith might not fail: for he knew that *Peter* was not able by his own power to withstand such a strong temptation, but would be shamefullie foyled in it, though he was so confident of his own strength.

[a] Luk. 22. 57.
[b] 33.

When *Peter* was in this fearful condition by his great sin through the cunning of the Devil, Christ did graciously look

look back upon him, and touched his heart with his Spirit, [c] and made him remember the crowing of the Cock, which was the token of remembrance that Christ gave him. Then *Peter* knew how heinously he had sinned, and then also he presently went out from that wicked companie to avoid further occasions of sinning, *and wept bitterly*, which was a true Testimonie of the sorrow of his heart, because he had so grosly denied his dear Master. [c] Mark. 14.

Here we may discover the frailty of the flesh, though we be in the state of Grace, if God doth not still uphold us with the power of his Grace: For our passions will overpower us, our sins will prevail against us, and every temptation of the Devil will make us let go the Anchor of our Hope in God, if we had not the benefit of Christs prayer, that our Faith fail not in these our spiritual conflicts. Here also we may see what deep impression sudden fear will sometimes make in our hearts: for it will sink our Spirits, and take away all humane Strength and Courage. Thus it was with *Josephs* Brethren, when they found their Mony in their Sacks mouth: [d] *for their heart failed, and they were afraid.* [d] Gen. 42. 28.

The *Canaanites* were not able to stand before the Children of *Israel*, [e] because *the Lord did lay the fear of them, and the dread of them upon all the Land.* Sudden fear will also shake the very foundation of our faith, and of all other spiritual Graces that are in us, as it wrought upon *Peter* at this time. This is an humane Passion that all men are subject unto; but a good Conscience, and a watchful Eye are the best preservatives against it: For as the Psalmist saith, [f] *The workers of iniquity are in great fear, where no fear is; because the guilt of their sin lieth upon their Consciences.* [e] Deut. 11. 25. [f] Psal. 53. 4, 5.

Here also we may discover the policy of the Devil, who putteth his Hook into such plausible and harmless Baits, as do give us no occasion to suspect any hurt or danger, whereby we are easily brought under his power, if we have not the assistance of Gods holy Spirit to escape them.

Wherefore, we have great cauſe to ſtand continually upon our watch, and to ſuſpect our own ſtrength, and to be careful what we ſpeak, and what we hear, what we do, and what we ſee done, what ſteps we tread, and what company we come into: for there might be much danger, where we ſee no appearance of it. Let *Peters* example keep us from preſuming upon our own ſtrength; leſt God doth permit the Devil to winnow us as Wheat, that we may know how weak we are without the power of his Grace, and to make us afraid of falling into temptations. This fear is not ſlaviſh, but it is an holy and a true filial fear, which will keep us from all occaſions of ſin, whereby God may be diſhonoured, and it will bring us to an holy care, how to walk circumſpectly before God in all Piety and Godlineſs; it will alſo reſtrain us from all ſinful deſires, and put us forward to the practiſe of all holy duties.

From hence alſo we may draw ſweet Conſolation to our Souls, though the meaſure of our Faith and of other Graces be but ſmal: for the Devil can do nothing without leave and permiſſion from God, who will not give him power againſt us above our ſtrength, but will reſtrain him from effecting that, which his malicious will doth intend and purpoſe for our hurt. He may be permitted to ſift us with his temptations, as he did *Peter*, he may bring troubles and afflictions upon us, as he did upon *Job*; but he ſhall never overthrow our Faith, nor quite bereave us of Hope: for God will ſo order and diſpoſe of our ſufferings, that they ſhall procure our good, either to purge us from ſome corruptions that we cheriſh, or elſe to make us keep more cloſe to our God; and this is our great comfort, That Chriſt hath Prayed for us, that our Faith might hold out to the end; though the combat we fight be very difficult and dangerous, and our ſtrength very weak.

Afflictions and Croſſes will try our patience, Scorns and Reproaches will try the meekneſs of our ſpirits, Want and Penury, will try our truſt and confidence in the providence

providence of God, anguish of Soul for sin will try our Faith and Hope in Christ, want of answer to our praiers will try the fervencie and faithfulness of them, and the fear of persecution, or torment, will try our constancie and perseverence in the truth. If we find anie Grace weak in us, Christ will make it stronger, if we sue unto him for it by our faithful Praiers: For the Spirit of Grace rested upon him, that Grace might plentifullie flow down to all that have interest in him by Faith: [g] *Like the precious Ointment that was poured upon* Aarons *head, which went down to the skirts of his garments.* [g] Psal. 133. 2.

If this be our Condition, that we are daily subject to divers temptations, which of our selves we can neither prevent, nor overcome, we must then keep close to our gracious Saviour and Redeemer, who onlie can keep us from them, or preserve us in them, [h] and *he will not suffer us to be tempted above the strength of our Faith; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.* [i] *Though we fall, we shall not be utterly cast down:* For our Lord Christ holdeth us with his hand, and he will raise us up again by true repentance, as he did *Peter.* If the floud-gates of sorrows are set open upon us if the fear of troubles, or the fear of death doth surprize us, Christ will stop those floud-gates, and will comfort us at the hour of death; or else he will give us an eye of faith, not to look upon them with a sad and heavie heart; but to look up above them to that celestial happiness which he hath prepared for us, which no eye hath seen, no tongue can express, and no heart can conceive, and to wait patientlie for it, until Christ our ever blessed Redeemer shall reveal it to us, which will be but in part in this life by Faith; but fullie and perfectlie in the life to come according to everie mans capacitie. Also, if the Devil doth aggravate our sins, and sets them before us in a multiplying Glass to the breaking of our hearts with godlie sorrow, and to the anguish of our Souls, which will make us shed many bitter tears for them, as *Peter* did, [h] 1 Cor. 10. 13. [i] Psal. 37. 24.

then Christ will look graciouſlie upon us, and will give us a double meaſure of true conſolation by the aſſurance of the pardon and forgiveneſs of them.

We may further learn Inſtructions by *Peters* fall, that if we give way to any ſin, the Devil will eaſily draw us unto higher degrees of ſinning, as he did *Peter*: For at the firſt he did but ſimply deny Chriſt, then he denied him with an oath, [k] *And at laſt he began to curſe and to ſwear that he knew not the man*; and therefore we muſt be very careful to nip ſin in the bud, leſt it lay us open to the Devils tyranny, or ſtop the current of grace to our hearts, whereby we ſhall not be able to recover our ſelves; but rather we ſhall fall away more and more from God. Sin is a ſpiritual gangrene to the ſoul, which will eate into all the faculties of it, if it be not in time cut off, and killed by faith in the death of Chriſt, and by true Repentance. There is ſo much of the unregenerate part in the beſt of Gods ſervants, as that they ſin daily, and the Devil is ready to take advantage upon every ſin; but he cannot eaſily faſten his ſting upon their ſins; becauſe they are not glued ſo faſt to their hearts, but that they may eaſily remove them: whereas his ſting will ſoon take hold of any ſin that is rooted in us, either by cuſtome, or by delight, to wound our ſouls even to the death. If we ſleight the leaſt ſin, it will bring us on to greater, and if we be careleſs of ſmall ſins, they will bring us to a cuſtom of ſinning, which will quickly beget an habit of ſin in us, which is a fit ground for the Devil to work upon, to keep us from returning unto God, and to plunge us deep into the gulf of ſin, unleſs Chriſt in his abundant mercy doth touch our hearts with his Spirit, to let us ſee from whence we are fallen, and doth alſo give us grace to repent and return to the Lord, and then we ſhall keep a more diligent watch over our ſelves for the time to come.

[k] Mat. 26. 74.

If we look upon our ſelves in *Peter*, we ſhall ſee that we alſo are ſubject to the like deluſions of the Devil; we are as ready to deny Chriſt, and to fall away from God, as he

he was, and the fear of trouble, perſecution, or danger for Chriſt will prevail as much with us, as it did with him, to make us renounce our Profeſſion and the Truth of the Goſpel, and to bring us to the brink of perdition; but Chriſt will not ſuffer us to fall into that bottomleſs pit, but will look upon us in mercy, as he did upon *Peter*.

The Devil did delude *Peter* with vain hope, that by this means he ſhould eſcape the trouble and danger that might come upon him, if it were known that he was a Diſciple of Chriſt: for thus he brought him into the ready way to loſe the grace and favour of his Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt, and into the way that leadeth to eternal deſtruction. Thus alſo doth the Devil delude us, if we truſt him: for he will promiſe all worldly wealth and earthly pleaſures, and will give to ſome a large portion of them in part of payment; but in the end he will pay them with wormwood and gall, which will be more bitter to them, than *Peters* tears were unto him. When we think our ſelves moſt ſtrong, then we are ſooneſt overcome; and when we preſume moſt upon our own ſtrength, then we give the Devil the greateſt advantage againſt us. In proſperity we think our ſelves ſo ſtrong, that we cannot be ſhaken, we are then ſecure and able to ſtand unmoveable againſt any oppoſition; [l] *but let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall*: For alas, we know not the wiles of Satan, we cannot conceive how many wayes he hath to deceive us. What way ſhall we then take to eſcape theſe wiles and deceits, whereof the world is full by his means? There is a deceitful tongue, againſt which *David* thus prayeth, [m] *Deliver my ſoul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue*. There is alſo a bag of deceitful weights, which is alwayes ſeconded with a falſe tongue, as the Lord ſpeaketh by his Prophet, [n] *Shall I account them pure with the wicked ballances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have ſpoken lies and their*

[l] 1 Cor. 10. 12.

[m] Pſal. 120. 1.

[n] Mic. 6. 11, 12.

tongue

tongue is deceitful in their mouth. The wise man telleth
[o] Prov. 14. 25. us, [o] of a deceitful Witness, [p] and that the dainties at a rich
[p] Prov. 23. 3. mans table are deceitful meat; because they will easily in-
[q] Prov. 27. 6. tice us to gluttony: Also, [q] that the kisses of an enemy are deceitful: for they proceed from a false heart. Who can discover the deceitfulness of his own heart? or the delusions of his own fancy? Every sinful lust and evil concupiscence doth delude us, the world is full of deceit to beguile us, wicked men have their wiles to vex the godly, and such as are simple in heart. [r] as the Midianites vexed
[r] Num 25. 18. the Children of Israel with their wiles, wherewith they beguiled them in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozby. If we will be well fenced from these delusions which come from the Devil, [s] we must put on the whole
[s] Eph 6 11. Armour of God, and then we shall be able to stand against them all. This holy Armour will also defend us from all the delusions of worldly vanities, and of our own sinful lusts; howsoever the world, the flesh, or the Devil shall tempt us: for it will preserve and keep us from the evil of their temptation.

Consider now that God, who can bring good out of evil, and can make all things work together for the good of his servants, made *Peters* fall to be a means of exceeding great good unto him: for thereby he did see the weakness of his Faith, to keep him from presumption; also unsuspected dangers, to keep him from security, he did see the malice and subtilty of the Devil, to make him more careful and watchful over himself, and he was the better able by his own experience to comfort and strengthen his brethren in their slips and falls; but above all, it made him love Christ his dear Lord with more intire affections, and to stick closer unto him for the time to come, and to be more courageous in his cause. Thus God turned the evil which the Devil intended for *Peters* hurt, and made it conduce to his great good: and thus also will he turn away the evil of our sins, and of our temptations, and the evil of our sorrows and sufferings, and will make them advance

vance his own glory, and to be profitable to us, if we can bath our sins in our penitentiall teares, as *Peter* did.

Now we come to consider more fully how the divell went to work to make *Peter* fall so fearfully: surely the instruments, which he used, were but the high Priests servants, the words which they spake to *Peter* were of no great consequence, they were neither threatning, nor terrifying, which in themselves could not so much affright him: neither was it onely the sudden fear of danger, or those wicked suggestions of the divel, though they did work much upon him, to make him doubt of the Deity of Christ, now he saw him so contemptibly used of the Priests and Elders, that made *Peter* fall so dangerously: for he was in more danger of his life but a little before, and yet he was not daunted; but the divell knew that *Peter* was of an hot fiery spirit, and violent in his passions, which would easily make him say he knew not what, and therefore he did chiefly work upon them which would transport him beyond the bounds of his reason and understanding, and also beyond the bounds of grace and godlinesse. All that went before were but as engines of warre, which he fitted and prepated for this great battery: By his suggestions he did undermine *Peters* faith and confidence in Christ, to make way that fear might take the greater hold upon him, that so he might by degrees bring him to such an hight of passion as should over-power, his reason, understanding, faith, and all spiritual grace that was in him; and thus he brought him to deny, to forswear, and to abjure his dear Saviour, even with execrations, whom he knew to be now about the great work of mans salvation. When Jesus was transfigured upon Mount *Tabor*, *Peter* spake he wist not what: for sudden fear carried him beside himself. Also, when Jesus shewed his Disciples what he should suffer at *Jerusalem*, *Peter* began to rebuke him for it: for he was carried beyond the bounds of mo-

Mar. 9. 6.

Mar. 16. 21, 22, 23.

desty and sobriety with a preposterous zeal, and a secret pride, which the divell did stir up in him. Thus was the violence of *Peters* passions the immediate cause of his downfall, because they did exceed moderation, and were not regulated according the holy will of God.

Thus also did the devill go to work with us to bring us to perdition; first he will set upon us with his subtile wiles and delusions; then he will labour to undermine our faith, and trust in God by his evill suggestions and wicked stratagems, that we should not wait upon God for his help and succour in our distresses, that we should not depend upon his Providence for relief and comfort in our wants and necessities, and that we should not rest upon him and upon his mercy in Christ for our salvation.

If all this will not serve his turn to bring us to confusion, then he will assault us with feares and doubtings to disquiet the peace of our consciences, he will frighten us with troubles and dangers for the profession of the Truth; he will make us doubt of the Wisdome of God to direct us in all our affairs, that we may trust to our own Wisdome with our God, he will make us doubt of his power to deliver us, when we are in any straits, as he did *Peter*, to make us trust to secondary meanes without God, or else to use unlawfull meanes for our safety; and he will make us doubt of the mercy and love of God, when we feel the smart of his rod, or the anguish of our spirits for our sins, to make us think that God hath forsaken us, that he hath cast us out of his favour, and that there is no hope of comfort for us, that so he may bring us into despair.

How was holy *Job* terrified with these doubts and
* Job 7. 13, 14. feares in his afflictions, * when his bed did not comfort him, his couch did not ease his complaint, and when his soul chose strangling and death rather than his life?
* Psal 77. thus it was also * with *Asaph* and others.

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If all other meanes fail, then the divell will work upon our passions, and personall infirmities, and he will kindle such a fire there, as will devour our reason, and understanding, as will mislead our zeal, and the affections of our hearts, and will carry us beside our selves, and beyond the limits of Piety and goodnesse; If he meeteth with such men as will give way to their passions, he will easily inflame them with fury, and rage beyond all moderation, or else he will drive them down into discontent and despair, which is very hardly recovered.

But by the wisedome of the Spirit of God we shall discover and escape his wiles and delusions; by the power of grace we shall withstand his wicked suggestions; by vertue of a good conscience we shall stand upright in the fear of troubles, and dangers, [y] and the strength of our faith in Christ will carry us on cheerfully through all afflictions, crosses and sorrowes, and it will confirm our trust and confidence in God, so that we shall find this of *David* to be true, [z] *They that trust in the Lord shall be delivered out of all their troubles, and shall not be confounded.* [a] *Hezekiah* was delivered from *Senacherib's* great Army, because he trusted in the Lord. If *Peter* had trusted in his Lord and Master Christ Jesus, whom he knew to be the Son of God, he had never fallen so dangerously as he did.

[y] Rom. 11. 20.

[z] Psal. 22. 4, 5.

[a] 2 Kin. 18. 5.

Faith will also bring us to the true fear of God, which will enable us to over-power and suppresse the violence of our passions, though we be naturally inclined thereunto.

Lastly, Faith will strengthen us against all doubtings, and distrust, when Gods corrections are upon us: [b] *for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* If we endure chastening, God dealeth with us as with sons. Thus saith *Eliphaz* to *Job*, [c] *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; there-*

[b] Heb. 12. 6, 7.

[c] Job 5. 17.

for

fore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty. Why then should we mistrust the love and favour of God, when we are under his visitation? Why do we not put more confidence in his power, to defend us? more trust in his care to preserve us? and more hope in his promises to save and deliver us from our enemies, and out of troubles and dangers? Wherefore if we do piously meditate upon these things, it will be a great strengthening to our Faith, and exceeding comfortable to our souls in all our temptations, sorrows and sufferings.

Consider in the next place, that as Christ appointed the crowing of the Cock to be *Peters* remembrancer of his sin; so likewise God in much mercy hath many waies to put us also in minde of our sins, and to call us to speedy repentance for them, which we ought with all care and diligence to mark and observe. If God doth forbear and suffer us to go long unpunished for our of-
[d]Rom. 2. 4. fences, [d]his goodnesse herein should lead us to repentance. But if he doth give us any check of conscience, or layeth any affliction upon us, they are as so many warnings to make us remember our sins with grief of heart, and to bring us to repent of them, that we may escape the evill which otherwise our sins would bring upon us. But when the holy Ghost doth touch our hearts, as he did *Peters*, he will work with unresistible power to make us think upon our sins with godly sorrow, with true contrition and compunction of spirit, with hatred and detestation of them, he will make us confesse and acknowledge them before God, and earnestly to crave the forgivenesse of them by Faith in Christ, and to have an holy assurance of it by our true and sound repentance. But if we remember our former sins with delight and approbation, we sin them over again, and this remembrance is sinfull, and it proceedeth from our corrupted nature, and not from grace, which will never bring us to forsake them, or to repent

of them. When Peter came to himself, and remembred his unthankfulneſſe to his Lord and Maſter, and did ſee from whence he was fallen, he was wounded to the very ſoul, and preſently went out to ſeek a place where he might eaſe the grief of his heart with his bitter teares.

Conſider now with all pious devotion, how dangerous it is, and what advantage we give the divell, if we reiterate any ſins, as namely ſwearing, lying, uncleanneſs, drunkenneſſe, Sabbath-breaking, or the like: for it will faſten the guilt of that ſin cloſer to our ſouls, which will not be removed without bitter teares; but will preſs us down to the pit of deſtruction. Conſider alſo, that great and crying ſins require loud cryes, deep ſighs and grones, and many teares, which we cannot pour forth, untill we do abandone all our wicked and lewd companions, and all former occaſions that did intiſe or provoke us thereunto, and untill Chriſt doth look upon us, and touch our hearts with his Spirit, to let us know that he doth take notice of them. [e] We ſhould therefore watch and ſtand faſt in the faith, that we depart not from Chriſt; but ſupport our faith with ſtedfaſt hope and aſſurance, that he will ſtabliſh us with his free Spirit, never to fall away from him totally and finally. [e] 1 Cor. 16. 13.

But thou wilt ſay as ſometimes *Peter* did, that though thou ſhouldſt dye with Chriſt, yet thou wilt never deny him, nor forſake him, but do not truſt too much to thine own ſtrength, though thou art in the State of grace: for if Chriſt doth not uphold thy faith, the power of Satans temptations will prevail againſt thee, thine own heart will deceive thee, and the devill will be too cunning for thee. [f] Thou maiſt honour Chriſt with thy lips, and yet in heart thou maiſt deny him: for if the power of a Chriſtian life goeth not along with thy outward profeſſion, thou doſt then diſhonour his holy Name, doſt forſake Him in thy heart. If there be ſuch [f] Ezech. 33. 31.

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unfaithfulnesse in thee to Christ thy Saviour, and if there be such hypocrisie hidden under a fair profession, then every rumour of trouble, or danger for Christ, every alluring vanity, and every delightfull sin will make thee
a Psal. 78. 57. turn aside from him: & like a *deceitfull bow*; because thy heart is not well seasoned with grace, to make thee stand firm and stedfast unto Christ, and to his truth against all opposition.

If this be thy fidelity to thy Saviour, and if thou dost repose so little confidence in him, then surely he will not regard thee, though thou dost howle and call unto him day and night, when thou art in any distresse or misery. The Lord complaineth of his own people,
b Hos. 7. 14 that they had not cryed unto him with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: for they did still rebell against him.

Wherefore let there be truth and sincerity in thy heart, that thy heart and thy tongue may go together in thy Prayers, in thy vowes, and in all thy services to God and man: let thy heart and thy hand go together in thy almes to the poor, and in all thy works of charity: for if thy heart be not faithfull to God, thy best services and duties cannot be accepted. Also keep thy heart closely knit to Christ by faith, and then he will cast an eye of mercy upon thee, as he did upon *Peter*, if at any time through humane weaknesse, or upon the violence of any passion, or strong temptation thou shalt fall away from him. Thy heart is that which Christ requireth:
c Prov. 23. 26. for thus he saith by *Solomon*, *My son give me thy heart*: give not thy heart therefore to the pleasures and vanities of the world, nor to carnall lusts and delights; but onely unto God.

Now Meditate seriously upon all the circumstances of *Peters* fall, and thou wilt find thy self likewise subject to the like provocations, and to the like frailties and fallings; and learn instruction thereby, not to be secure, because dangers and temptations do every where

attend

ſtend thee, and not to preſume upon thine own ſtrength, for that will not preſerve thee, but labour to be well rooted in the truth, and well grounded in the faith, and love of Chriſt, and then no ſpirituall enemy ſhall prevail againſt thee, and the cunning ſtratagems of the divell ſhall not hurt thee, no fear of perills and dangers ſhall make thy faith in Chriſt to fail, and no afflictions or troubles ſhall make thee out of hope of the love and favour of God in Chriſt, but thou wilt reſolve ſtill to be faithfull to thy Saviour, and to keep thy heart ſincere and upright towards God; and then Chriſt will reſtore thee if thou falleſt, he will heal thee by repentance, as he did *Peter*, if thou art wounded, and whatſoever thou feareſt ſhall not diſmay thee. Chriſt will be thy comfort in all thy ſorrowes, thy hiding place in all dangers, and he will be thy defence againſt all thy ſpirituall enemies, that they ſhall not overthrow the ſalvation of thy ſoul.

Chriſts ſufferings under Pilate.

NOw we come to conſider what Chriſt ſuffered under *Pilate*, and how the immaculate Lamb of God was hurried from the wolfe to the lyon, and from thence to the bear, and back again to the lyon, and ſo to the ſhambles, where he muſt be ſlain. For the more his Divine graces did ſhine forth in the purity of his life and Doctrine, the more did the divel rage, and the malice of the Jews increaſe againſt him. He is now brought before *Pilate*, and thither did the chief Prieſts and Elders come with their falſe accuſations againſt him. Luk 23. They likewiſe follow him from *Pilate* to *Herod*, before whom alſo they falſly accuſed him with much vehemency, yet they reſt not there, but they returned again to *Pilate* with their hearts full of envy and malice, and their mouthes full of opprobrious ſpeeches and blaſphemies againſt

against the innocent Lamb of God, to put him to death. Thus they persecuted the Lord of glory our gracious Redeemer, and yet these wicked dissembling Rulers did hide and cover their grosse hypocrisie, and their divilish malice under the pretence of sanctity and holinesse:

[b] Joh 18.28 [b] for they refused to go into *Pilates* judgement-hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passeover, for this was the preparation day. What holinesse can there be in a malicious heart? How can the heart be prepared to serve God aright, when the conscience is stained with the guilt of sin? and how durst they eat the Passover, when there was so much foure leaven of hateful malice in them? but they did stand more upon the outward form of godlinesse, then to perform it with pure affections, and with a good conscience.

Now we may easily see what Satans drift is against the servants of God: for if he did stirre up all his instruments to persecute Christ Jesus our Head with deadly hatred, he will not spare us that are his members; and he will set upon those that are most eminent in grace with his strongest assaults. Thus he assaulted *Job* with many and great afflictions, one upon the neck of another to overthrow his patience. [c] Thus he strongly tempted *David* to number the people, to make him trust in the arm of flesh, and to weaken his confidence in God; [d] and thus he buffeted *Paul* with his temptations and many sore afflictions. But this is our comfort, that he can do no more than God doth permit him, he cannot exercise his power according to his malice: for God will not suffer him to assault his weak servants with strong temptations; and though he doth sometimes permit him violently to set upon those that are rich in grace and strong in faith; yet he will order and dispose his attempts for their good, and not for their destruction, as the divell doth maliciously intend. God will make them serve for the triall and manifestation of

[c] 1 Chro. 21. 1.

[d] 2 Cor. 12. 7.

their

their graces, for the preventing of ſpirituall pride, and for the confirmation of their faith, and affiance in God by that experience of his aſſiſtance and gracious deliverance, which hereby they have gained.

From hence we may learn how to be prepared, when we come to the Lords Table to eat of his holy Supper, how to come to the hearing of his Word, and how to addreſſe our ſelves unto Prayer, and to pious meditations. If we come to theſe holy Ordinances with polluted hands, and with hearts defiled with the guilt of ſin, as theſe Rulers did to eat the Paſſover, what holineſſe ſoever we pretend, we do but diſſemble with God, we delude our own ſoules, and God will neither hear us nor accept us.

Wherefore we muſt caſt out the leaven of ſin, and purge our conſciences from dead works by faith in the bloud of Chriſt, before we come into the preſence of God, that our affections may be quickned and raiſed up to theſe heavenly and Divine Ordinances of God. But if our ſins do ſtick cloſe to our ſoules by our delight in them, they will binde us over to judgement, and to condemnation; and therefore we muſt not ſeek to hide them, or to colour them over with fair pretences, as if God could not ſee them; but we muſt confeſſe them, and lay them open before God from a truly humbled and penitent heart, that ſo we may come before him in ſincerity and in truth: for [e] *God knoweth the ſecrets of our hearts*. But if we will hide our ſins quite out of Gods ſight, we muſt hide them under the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt: for there is no other hiding place for ſin, but under this robe. [e] Pſal. 44. 21.

Thus the guilt of our ſins may be hidden from God, if we can apply to our ſouls Chriſt crucified, and his righteouſneſſe by faith. Alſo if we have a true aſſurance by our repentance, that our iniquities are forgiven, we may then, and not before, draw near unto God with comfort, and we may partake of his holy Ordinances

with much profit: for they are appointed for us, if we are thus prepared for them, and beſtowed onely upon ſuch as have intereſt in Chriſt by faith.

We come now to look upon the innocency of our bleſſed Redeemer, who was without ſpot or ſtain of ſin, both in the ſight of God and in the ſight of man; otherwiſe he could not have ſaved us from our ſins. Thus [f]Luk.17.5. [g]John 8.46 ſaith God himſelf of him, [f] *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* [g] *Which of you*, ſaith Chriſt to the Phariſees, *convinceth me of ſin?* *Pilate* and *Herod* did ſtrictly examine him, and yet they could find no Luk.23.14 fault in him. [h] *Pilate* himſelf did freely confeſſe that *Chriſt was blameleſſe, and therefore he ſought meanes how* [i]Mat.27.19 *to releaſe him.* Alſo, [i] *his wife ſent to him ſaying, Have thou nothing to do with that juſt man: for ſhe was much troubled that night by ſome revelations concerning him.* Though Chriſt was accuſed of many things, yet nothing could be proved againſt him: notwithſtanding Chriſt was willing in obedience to his Fathers will, to ſuffer the utmoſt that God had appointed for mans redemption: for if any part of this great Work had been left unfiniſhed, he could never have procured our atonement, and reconciliation with God.

Wherefore here is matter of great comfort for our hearts to meditate upon: for though the guilt of all our ſins was imputed unto Chriſt, yet he was not defiled therewith, and though he ſuffered for ſin, yet it was not for his own, but for the ſins of all the Elect of God, which he took upon himſelf: for the perfection of his purity, and of his righteouſneſſe did ſtill remain unſpotted, and undefiled, that we might be cloathed therewith, by faith, to hide our nakedneſſe, and the ſhame of our ſins when we come into the preſence of God to perform any holy ſervice unto him; but ſpecially when we ſhall appear before his dreadfull Tribunal at the laſt day.

From hence alſo we may draw much conſolation, when

whenwe are falſely accuſed, ſpitefully uſed, or cruelly perſecuted for the Profeſſion of the truth, and for a good conſcience: for our dear Saviour hath ſuffered the like in out Nature and for our ſakes, that theſe and the like ſufferings might be ſanctified to us, and that we ſhould follow Chriſts example of patience and meekneſs when we are under them.

We need not therefore be diſmaid, when we are thus unjuſtly dealt with: for Chriſt hath taken away the evill of theſe ſufferings, and hath taught us how to demean our ſelves under them; and if we wait patiently upon God, he will in due time make our innocency break forth like the Sun out of a cloud to his own glory, and to our great comfort.

Conſider now, and admire to ſee, how the malice and cruelty of the chief Prieſts and Scribes did increaſe againſt Chriſt: for when they perceived that *Pilate had* cleered his innocency, and was willing to releaſe him, their rage and fury was the more inflamed, [k] inſomuch as they moved the people to deſire that *Barrabas* might be releaſed to them who raiſed ſedition in the City, and was alſo a Murtherer, and that JESUS might be crucified, which kinde of death was moſt ignominious, moſt ſhamefull and accurſed. Though they knew by their own Law what a crying ſin in the eares of God the ſhedding of innocent blood was; yet no blood could ſatisfie them but innocent blood. *Pilate* offered them the blood of *Barrabas*; but that would not content them: for they thirſted after the pureſt blood that ever was ſpilt, even the moſt precious blood of the eternall Son of God; becauſe he laid open their corrupt doctrines, and diſcovered their hypocriſie to all the people. The cruell Jews did ſhed the blood of the Prophets that were ſent to them, and now they do eagerly hunt after the blood of Chriſt, whom they could no way convince of any ſin. Thus doth their diveliſh envy and malice carry on to the higheſt degree of rebelli-

[k] Mat. 27. 20.

on against God and against his Anointed.

Now let us meditate with an holy zeal and pious devotion upon the price of our Redemption: [1] *for we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from our vain conversation; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot,* who was both God and Man; so that the Jews [m] crucified him that was [m] *the Lord of glory*, and the blood which they spilt was the blood of that Person, who was God as well as Man, according to this of *Paul*, [n] *That God hath purchased to himself a Church with his own blood.*

[1] 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

[m] 1 Cor. 2. 8.

[n] Act. 20. 28

Wherefore, [o] *seeing we are bought with such a price, we ought to glorifie God in our bodies, and in our spirits, which* [p] *are Gods,* [p] *and not to fall away when we have tasted of the good Word of God, and of the powers of the world to come; seeing thereby we crucifie to our selves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame by our new committed sins after repentance.*

[o] 1 Cor. 6. 20

[p] Heb. 6. 5, 6.

Also, we must ruminate upon the transcendent worth of the blood of our crucified Redeemer with pure affections: for it was an infinite price to satisfie the justice of an infinite God. We cannot conceive, much lesse expresse the incomprehensible goodnesse of Christ, who of his meer love hath given up himself and his whole nature, both Divine and Humane, to purchase our redemption with his own blood. His Deity of it self could not suffer either hunger or thirst, pain or torment: for these and all other his sufferings did properly belong to his humane nature; but by the personall union of his humanity with his Deity, the Divine nature of Christ did suffer together with his humanity by a nearer simpathy, than is between the members of the naturall body and the head; or between the members of the mysticall body of Christ, and himself, who is their Head: for these members both naturall and spirituall are but knit and united to the head by firm ligaments; but the humanity of Christ was taken up into his Deity, and so made

made one Christ. *Saul* persecuted Christ, when he did persecute his Church: for thus saith Christ unto him, ¶ *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*: for he persecuted him in his members, he being their Head. How much more then did the Deity of Christ suffer throughout his whole passion by sympathizing with his humane nature, not onely as * God is the Head of Christ, but chiefly becaufe his humane nature was personally united to his Deity, this is the cause why the blood of Christ, his sufferings, and his death is of so great merit, and of such an infinite price. ¶ Act. 9. 4, 5. * 1 Cor. 11. 3.

If it be so, that Christ did give himself in his whole nature for us, that his blood should be spilt, his body mangled and tortured, his soul tormented, his Glory clouded with ignominy and shame, and that his Deity should be blasphemed and spitefully dishonoured for our redemption, and if we were bought with so great a price; we have then as great cause as ever *David* had, † *to blesse the Lord, and to stirre up all that is within us to praise his holy Name for all the benefits of our redemption: for he forgiveth all our iniquities, he healeth all our diseases, he redeemeth our lives from destruction, and he crowneth us with loving kindnesse and tender mercies.* † Psal. 103. 1, 2, 3, 4.

For if we can apply to our selves by a true faith, Jesus Christ, and him crucified for us, ‡ as *Paul* did, he will fasten the guilt of our sins to his own crosse, that it shall not cleave to our souls, and he will remit the punishment that is due to us for them; also, he will heal and cure all the spirituall diseases of our souls by powring clean water upon us, and by sanctifying us with his grace and holy Spirit unto newnesse of life, which is a sure evidence of the pardon of our sins, and then he will imbrace us with the armes of his love, and will crown us with everlasting peace. ‡ Gal. 2. 20.

Consider yet further to what height of impiety the spiteful and malicious Jews are brought, * *Pilate* washed his * Mat. 27. 24.

his hands in water before he gave ſentence againſt Chriſt, in token (as he thought) that he was innocent of the guilt of his blood, becauſe he knew him to be a juſt perſon; but the *Jewes* drowned themſelves in the blood of that immaculate Lamb and ſaid, *Let his blood be on us, and on our children.* O what a burden is innocent blood to the conſcience? What fearful judgements did they pull down upon themſelves, and upon their poſterity hereby? *David* found this to be true, when he did unjuſtly ſhed the innocent blood of *Uriah*: for this fact of his coſt him many a tear, before he coul get aſſurance of pardon for it.

[a] 2 Sam. 12. [b] Pſal. 51.

How ſevere was the puniſhment that God laid upon *Cain* for killing his brother *Abel*? and yet theſe wretched *Jewes* did wiſh that the moſt precious blood of Chriſt the eternall Son of God, might *lye upon them and upon their children*; to which God in juſtice did ſay, Amen. That blood which was the blood of the New Covenant, and ſealeth redemption to all that do apply it to themſelves by faith, is made a moſt heavy curſe to the *Jewes for their unbelief*, and it doth reſt upon their poſterity even to this day; becauſe they did deſpiſe it, and moſt maliciouſly trampled it under their feet: for they rejected him and would not believe in him for their ſalvation; but preferred a murtherer before him, which made their ſin the more odious in Gods eye.

[c] Heb 9 20

Wherefore let the thoughts and the Meditations of our hearts be, how to moderate and ſuppreſſe our raſh, and raging paſſions, that they break not out to wicked wiſhes, or impious execrations to our own hurt, or to the hurt of another; but ſpecially concerning blood, leſt God that heareth in heaven ſhould ſay, Amen to it: for then the guilt of that ſin will lye heavy upon us, and the evill which we have unadviſedly wiſhed will be grievous to them; except we do ſpeedily repent, that God in mercy may forgive us. We ſhould therefore

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ſet a continuall watch before our lips, that we ſpeak nothing againſt themſelves, or to the hurt of another: for God in his juſtice may bring the ſame evil upon us, which we have wiſhed either to our ſelves or to others; but we ought to accuſtome our ſelves to bleſſing and not to curſing, to wholeſome ſpeeches that may tend to edification, and not to miſchievous words that tend to deſtruction, and then God in mercy will ſay Amen to it.

Now obſerve and mark what barbarous cruelty the Gentiles did uſe againſt our dear Saviour: for as ſoon as he was condemed, [z] they ſcourged him without limitation of ſtripes; ſo that this of the Pſalmiſts was verified in Chriſt, [a] *The plowers plowed upon my back, they made long their furrows*: whereas the *Jews* were limited by the Law of God to fourty ſtripes. When Chriſt was thus cruelly ſcourged, then *Pilate* delivered him to be crucified, [c] and then the ſavage Gentiles did mock and deride him, they did ſpit upon him, they crowned him with thornes, and ſmote him on the head with a read, and then they led him away to be crucified.

[z] *Mar.* 15. 15.
[a] Pſal. 129. 3.
[b] Deut. 25 3.
[c] *Mat.* 27.

This was a dolefull ſpectacle, and able to make a deep impreſſion of tender compaſſion in any Chriſtian heart, to ſee a righteous man thus miſerably tortured; but much more to ſee the onely begotten Son of God thus diſhonoured, and thus ſhamefully uſed with as much diſgrace and ſhame as they could deviſe. But ſuch inhumanity did reign in their murthering mindes, and ſuch cruell deeds were acted with their bloody hands, that nothing could ſwage their malice and cruelty; and nothing could mollifie their ſtony hearts, or melt them into compaſſionate pitty; becauſe they were given up to a reprobate minde.

But let our hearts be touched with a true ſenſe of our Saviours ſufferings, and with a godly ſorrow and compunction for our ſins, when we ruminate and ponder in our thoughts, how unjuſtly our bleſſed Redeemer was con-

condemned, and how cruelly he was used for our sakes: for Gods controuersie was against us, and not against his dear Son. But because he of his tender love and compassion, stept in between Gods fierce wrath and us, which he knew was too heavy for us to bear, and took upon himself the guilt of our sins, and because the desire of his soul was to reconcile us to God his Father, he was willing that so much of Gods severe wrath, as in justice was due to us for our transgressions, should light upon himself, which he did meekly undergo to free us from it. If we are thus affected when we do seriously think upon the passion of our Saviour Christ, it will make us hate our sins with a perfect hatred, it will pull down our proud and haughty spirits; it will make us thankfully to acknowledge our unworthinesse of so great love from him, and it will bind us in a firm bond of love and obedience to him: then Christ will commiserate and pitty us in our sorrowes, and will comfort us in our sad condition.

But alas, we take no pleasure in such dolefull Meditations, we are not feelingly affected with our Saviours tedious and bitter passion, and therefore we cannot bring it home to our selves by faith; neither can we raise up the affections of our hearts hereunto, because we are not perswaded that he suffered more than his humane nature could have born, if it had not been supported by his Deity; neither do we faithfully believe, that what he suffered was for our redemption, as it was for all the elect of God; and therefore we can draw no spirituall comfort from thence to our souls.

These sad contemplations are not sweet to our taste, they are not delightfull to our corrupted nature, nor pleasing to our carnall desires: for we had rather go to the house of feasting, than to the house of mourning: our love to Christ is not so firm, and our faith in him is not so strong as to make our mindes constant in these heavenly Meditations, which are most profitable for the good of our souls.

If

If we find ſuch obduracy in our hearts, ſo little grace in our affections, and that our unregenerate part is ſo prevailing in us, that we can take no pleaſure to Meditate on the bitter paſſion of Chriſt, as if he were not to be pitied; we may juſtly condemn our ſelves of too much ingratitude for his great love to us, and we cannot then expect any compaſſion from him in our afflictions and miſeries.

If we look upon a Kings onely Son, and ſee him ſuffer all kind of rebuke and ſhame by rebells and traitors, and all kinde of torturings and tormentings for no offence given, ſhall we not pity his miſerable condition? And ſhall we not think upon his miſeries with ſad hearts? Then much more ſhould we be compaſſionately affected when we remember what great things Chriſt hath ſuffered for us; and yet the remembrance of them ſhould be delightfull to us, becauſe it was the Work of our redemption, and the price which he paid for our ranſome out of that ſpirituall bondage wherein we were holden by ſin and Satan.

Wherefore if thy Saviours ſufferings have made any impreſſion in thy heart, ſhew ſome fruits of thy thankfulneſſe to him by thy bowels of tender compaſſion, and of pity to his poor Saints that are in want and miſery: for thou mayeſt ſhew thy love to him in them. Chriſt looked with the eye of mercy upon thee, and did commiſerate thy wofull and diſtreſſed condition; he poured out the ſtreams of his moſt precious blood from all parts of his body, to waſh away the filth and the ſtaines of all thine iniquities, and haſt thou no ſparks of Charity for his poor diſtreſſed members? Canſt thou think upon his poverty, [d] who *had not whereon to lay his head*, and not reſtrain thy thoughts from pride and ambition? Canſt thou ſee thy ſelf in proſperity, and not pity and relieve the ſervants of God that are in miſery? Think upon his nakedneſſe when he was upon the croſſe for thee, to aſſwage thy vainity in apparell, and to in-

[d] Mat. 8. 20

duce thee to cloath his servants in their naked condition: remember his hunger and thirst to make thee sober and temperate in thy diet, and to refresh his hungry Members with something that comes from thy table, that
[a] Psal. 69. 22. [a] thy table become not a snare before thee.

If thou injoyest thy liberty, think upon thy Saviours bonds, and cast an eye of compassion upon his poor servants in the dungeon.

If thou canst make this good use of thy Meditations upon the passion and sufferings of Christ, it is a comfortable evidence, and a good assurance that Christ suffered for thee, and that thou art of the number of those whom he hath bought with his own blood, and whom he hath redeemed out of the prison of eternall death.

CHRISTS *sufferings under the Crosse.*

WE come now to consider yet further, how cruelly the stony-hearted Jewes, and the barbarous people dealt with our beloved Saviour: for they laid the heavy crosse upon him to bear it to Mount *Calvary*, whereon he was to be crucified, though he was much weakened by his bitter Agony but a little before, and for want of rest all that night, and though his back was rent, and torn with the whip, his body sore with cruell blowes, and faint with fasting, and with the losse of bloud. But because they feared he would faint by the way, or not come soon enough to the place where he was to dye, that they might have their fill of cruelty against him, and because the day was now farre spent,
[b] Luk. 23. 26. [b] *they compelled Simon a Cyrenian to bear his crosse after him.*
Mat. 27. 32. Now we may inlarge our Meditations upon the sorrows of our sweet Saviour, which do every hour increase upon him, and his deadly foes do still add griefe to his misery, by laying his crosse upon his tender back; yet

he did patiently bear it, though he was very sensible of the weight and burden of it, which was too heavy for his humane strength, considering how much he was weakened This wooden Crosse was but the shadow of that which did most presse him: for it was the wrath of God which was now poured out upon him, that was such an unsupportable burden that his humane nature could not bear it without the power of his Deity to support and assist him in it. *Simon* could help him bear this crosse; but no creature, either man or Angel could help him bear the burden of Gods wrath for the guilt of our sins, that was now charged upon him, which was so great and so heavy, that it made his knees to bow, his heart to faint, and his very soul to tremble: for he stood now before the Tribunal of Gods justice, as guilty of all manner of sin, Original and actual, of Omission and of Comission: for the guilt of the fouleſt sins of all the elect of God was imputed to him, and he was to satisfie the justice of God for every sin, great and smal before he could be eased of his sorrowes, paines and torturings, and before he could finish the work of our redemption, which God sent him to do. In Christ was verified this of the Prophet, [b] *I have trodden the wine-presse alone, and of the people there was none with me: and I looked and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to upheld: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and it upheld me.* This is he whom *John* saw *sitting upon a white horse, who was cloathed with a vesture dipt in blood, and his name is called the Word of God.* Christ was that [d] mighty warrier who came from *Edom*, who had many strong enemies to encounter with, that did sorely wound him; but at length he got the victory over them all by the greatnesse of his strength, and by the righteousnesse of his Words, and therefore he was glorious in his red apparell, and mighty to save all such as belong unto him, and do put their trust in him.

[b] Isa. 63. 3, 5

[c] Rev. 19 11 13.

[d] Isa. 63. 1.

This crosse is a fit resemblance of all the troubles and

sorrowes that we shall meet with in this life: for it was heavy and troublesome to bear. First, because Christ himself did bear it; he found the weight and trouble of it, and he was a man of sorrowes, he was acquainted with grief, and he did feel the burden of our afflictions and tribulations, to make them easie to us, and according to our strength. Secondly, because it was so heavy unto Christ, that he was ready to faint under it; whereby he did expresse in himself the weaknesse and frailty of our nature: for if crosses and tribulations presse hard upon us, we are ready naturally to repine, to cast off all hope, and to sink under the burden of them; and therefore Christ knowing by his own experince the weight of them, and our inability to bear them with a contented patience, will comfort, support, and strengthen us under them. Thirdly, that was a wooden crosse, which was not for perpetuity, but continued onely for a time: to shew that our crosses and sorrowes continue not for ever: for God doth afflict us but for a short time; but his loving kindnesse and tender mercies to us
[c] Psal. 30. 5. continue for ever. Thus saith holy *David*, [c] *His anger endureth but a moment, in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.* Christ will not suffer us to faint under our troubles and miseries; but will ease and refresh us, as *Simon* eased him, when he was under the like condition. But if it be the will and pleasure of God that the crosse shall rest upon us, and that afflictions shall follow us untill we have finished our course in this life, death will then take it quite from us, and we shall never bear it any more, and we know not how soon that may be; also, it will open a door to us for our entrance into perfect blisse
[d] 2 Cor. 4. 16. 17. and happinesse. [d] *Wherefore we should not faint, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a farre more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.* Lastly, God hath many wayes to

help

help and ease us, when we are under the crosse: for as he provided this stranger to bear the crosse after him, because none of his own nation had any pity on him; so likewise God will provide meanes for our comfort and succour in our tribulations, beyond our expectation. When the Jewes were in great danger of destruction by *Hamans* wicked device; Queen *Esther* thought it dangerous for her to go in unto the King to speak in the behalfe of her people, except she were called; but *Mordecai* sent her this word, *Think not with thy self that thou shalt escape in the Kings house more than all the Jewes: for if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jewes from another place, but thou and thy fathers house shall be destroyed; and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?* Esth. 4. 13, 14. Wherefore we may rest upon God by faith in Christ for comfort or deliverance in all our necessities and dangers: for though our friends, or such as have relation to us, do refuse to help us according to their abilities; yet God will raise up strangers for our comfort, and will send us meanes of deliverance which we little thought on.

This should teach us to bear meekly and patiently the crosse that God doth lay upon us: for thereby we do shew our conformity with Christ, we follow his example and then he will give us grace to make an holy use of the crosse to the glory of God, and to the comfort of our soules.

Also, if we wait upon God with a stedfast hope; he will then give us a cheerfull heart under the crosse, and a willing minde to bear it, untill he shall be pleased in his good time to remove it from us; which will be when it will make most for his own glory, and for our eternall good.

From hence we may draw true consolation to our soules: for though Christ had more laid upon him than his humane strength was able to bear; yet we shall not

be overloaden with the burden of our crosses, because God hath committed the tempering of the cup of our afflictions to our Saviour Christ, who will shew his tender compassion to us, though no humanity was shewed to him: he best knoweth what we are able to bear, and the sharpnesse of pain, smart, sorrow of minde, and of any calamity whatsoever, but specially he knoweth that we are not able to bear the anger and wrath of God for our sins; and therefore he hath made an atonement between God and us by the merit of his blood, and hath also changed the nature of our crosses and sufferings by that which he hath suffered for us, and hath now appointed them for an holy and profitable end. For whereas in their own nature they are simply evill, and the punishments of sin, and destructive to us, he hath sanctified them, he hath taken out the sting of evill that was in them, and hath changed them into fatherly chastisements for the reformation of our sinfull lives; so that whatsoever we suffer, though it be the due desert of our sins; yet it comes not now from Gods indignation and fury for our destruction, but from his fatherly love to correct and chastise us, as his children, to bring us to better obedience to his will, and that our souls may be saved in the day of his appearing. Also if our corrections are too sharp, Christ will ease the smart with his supplying grace: for [h] *he will be a present help to us in time of need.*

[h] Heb 4.16.

But if God doth shew us any way to escape the danger of the crosse, to shun troubles, persecutions, or the like, and if he doth afford us any lawfull meanes for our recovery out of pain or sickneſse, for our relief in want and scarsity, for our support and comfort in tribulations and distresses, we are bound by the command of Christ to go that way for our safety, and to use the means which he hath appointed for our health, for our relief, and for our comfort in our miseries. Thus said Christ to his Disciples, [i] *When they persecute you in this city flee ye into another*

[i] Mat. 10.23.

ther. When Christ himself was in danger of his life at *Nazareth*, [k] *he passed through the midst of them and went his way.* At another time when they intended to cast stones at him, [l] *he hid himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.* If crosses do come upon us, which we might lawfully have shunned, God doth not then lay the crosse upon us; but we pull it upon our selves: also if we have meanes for our own good, and do neglect it, we tempt God, and despise the riches of his goodnesse to us. But if we use the meanes that God hath given us in relation to Christ by faith, he will then send a blessing upon the meanes for our good. Likewise if we do not sanctifie the meanes which we use by Prayer to God in Christ, we can have no ground to hope for ease, or recovery in our sicknesses, for comfort in our sorrowes, or deliverance out of our troubles, and without Prayer we cannot expect that good successe by our endeavours which we desire. This was the sin of King *Asa*, [m] whose disease in his feet was exceeding great; yet he sought not to the Lord, but to the Physicians for his cure. If we suffer unjustly Christ hath taught us by his own example to bear it meekly and patiently, and to commend our cause unto God, to rest upon him, and to wait his time for our inlargement, for God heares the cryes of the oppressed, and the prayers of them that mourn, & he puts the teares of the weeping widow into his bottle, and delivereth poor captives out of prison. Wherefore if we seek to Christ in our necessities, we shall obtain what we desire or what is better for us.

[k] Luk. 4 29, 30.
[l] Joh. 8. 59.
[m] 2 Chr. 16. 12.
[n] Psal. 56. 8.

But some will say thus, my passions cannot bear the crosse of a reviling and injurious tongue, the cup of affliction is bitter to me, I covet ease, delight and pleasure, and I am ready to faint through the weaknesse of my strength, under the burden of sickenesse, pain or trouble. But wilt thou give so much way to thy passions as to dishonour God thereby? is thy minde so much set upon

vain pleasures, as if no sorrow could come upon thee? Did Christ bear his crosse, and dost thou think to go free? Dost thou not know, O fainting soul, how to measure thy strength? if thou dost measure it by the common measure of nature, thou wilt find it too weak to bear thee up against those crosses, afflictions, or temptations, which thou shalt meet with in this life; but if thou dost measure it by the measure of the sanctuary, and by the grace of Christ that is in thee, thou wilt then perceive what strength thou hast to bear the crosse: for thy strength lyeth not in the wealth, or in the arm of flesh; but in thy faith in Christ, and in the graces of his Spirit. If thou hast but a little faith, and a small measure of grace, thou hast then but little strength and courage to encounter with the assaults of the devill, with the troubles and vexations of this world, and with the discomforts of sickness; but art easily surprised with every temptation and sinfull lust, and as easily overwhelmed when the waves of affliction come upon thee. Wherefore when thou art upon thy bed of sickness; or in any distresse and misery, complain not of thy strength of body, if that be weak and faileth; but look to the strength of grace that is in thee: for grace may grow and increase, though the strength of thy body doth decay, or is spent and grace will uphold thee from sinking, even in the bitter pangs of death, and it will make thee to hold on constant to the end in all thy sufferings. 2 Pet. 3. 18.

Consider in the next place, that Christ hath appointed his crosse to be the badge of every true Christian, which he must wear for the honour of his Lord and Master. Thus saith Christ, ¶ *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his crosse, and follow me.* Also *Paul* saith, ¶ *That through much tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God.* Christ giveth this badge to some, for the tryal and the manifestation of his graces in them, that he may be glorified thereby: to others, for their humiliation, and to bring them to repentance Mat. 16 24. ¶ Acts 14. 22.

repentance for their sinnes; he doth exercise others under the crosse, to conform them unto himself in his sufferings, and to make them bear it contentedly. Also he gives this badge to some to keep them from security, and to prevent their backslidings from God: for by these tryals and afflictions he doth alwayes intend the good of his servants, and not their hurt.

Where this mark is truly imprinted, there will grace appear, and the fruits of it will break forth in their conformity to the will of God, in their faith and patience under afflictions, and in their rejoycing in the crosse of Christ. This was the Apostles joy, [t] *that they were counted worthy to suffer shame and rebuke for the Name of Christ.* And this was *Pauls* glory: [f] for saith he, *God forbid that I should glory save in the crosse of our Lord Jesus Christ*, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For such is the tender and indulgent care of Christ toward those that wear his livery, that though they are put into the fining pot of affliction, there to have their drosse and corruptions purged and refined, yet he will not suffer them to receive any detriment thereby; but he will bring them forth purer gold than they were before.

[t] Acts 5.

[f] Gal. 6.

Wherefore learn to carry the crosse of Christ in thy heart, expect it daily, and resolve to bear it willingly, when God shall be pleased to lay it upon thee, and then thou wilt not feel it so heavie as it is in its own nature; also imprint the remembrance of his passion in thy minde, thereby to mortifie all thy worldly lusts and sinfull desires. This cognizance will tell thee what inheritance thou hast in Christ, if thou dost duly examine thy heart, when thou art under the crosse, how thou hast glorified God by thy faith and patience, how much thou art refined from thy corruptions, how much nearer thou art brought unto Christ in thine affections, to love him, to confide in him, to delight in the sweet fruition of him, and to meditate on his goodnesse and love to

thee. If thou canst finde such fruits of thy crosse, and that in the midst of thy sorrowes thou canst say with ho-
13. ly *Job*, : *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:* then be confident that Christ hath set his own stamp upon thy heart, he will know thee for his own, he will hide thee under the shadow of his wings, he will provide for thee in all thy necessities, and upon all occasions, and all the powers of darknesse shall not be able to raise his stamp or the impression of it out of thy heart, or to separate thee from Christ.

Mark further, and consider it well, that there were some that followed Christ all that dolorous way to
Luk. 23. Mount *Calvary*, who could not refrain from teares and
, 28. sorrowfull sobs; but bewailed him and lamented when they saw his dolefull and sad condition, and they were chiefly women, to whom Jesus turning said, *Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but weep for your selves and for your children.* Whereby he did graciously instruct them, how to fix their mourning upon the right object that their teares may proceed from a principle of grace; not to mourn for him, because he did suffer no more than what was appointed by his heavenly Father, and he did bear it in obedience to his will: also, he did undertake no more than he was well able to undergoe, and no more could be laid upon him than was decreed in his Fathers counsell for the redemption of man. But Christ would have them weep and mourn for their sins, which brought the wrath of God upon themselves, and upon their children, : for there were grievous judgements, which would shortly come upon them. Also Christ did intimate to them, that their sins, and the sins of their children were a great part of the cause why he suffered such contumelies, and so much cruelty, both by the Jews and by the Gentiles, that they might be freed from the guilt and from the punishment of them.

Consider now, that Christ doth give them two speciall reasons why they should weep and mourn for themselves

ſelves and for their children. Firſt, becauſe of the great deſolation and finall deſtruction that was ſhortly after to come upon that famous and renowned City, and upon the whole nation of the Jews, wherein they and their children ſhould ſuffer very great calamities; therefore Chriſt did tell them, *That the dayes were coming in which they ſhould ſay, bleſſed are the barren, and the wombes that never bare, and the paps which never gave ſuck.* *And Chriſt himſelf wept for the miſery that was to come upon Jeruſalem.* Luk. 23. Luk. 19.

Secondly Chriſt willeth them to reſerve their teares to lament and bewail their ſins, and the ſins of their children; becauſe the great and terrible day of the general judgement was coming, when every one both high and low, great and ſmall, young and old muſt give a particular account to God of what they have done in the fleſh, either in thought word or deed, whether it be good or evill. *Then ſhall they begin to ſay to the mountains, fall on us, and to the hills cover us.* Iſa. 2. 19. Hoſ. 10.

Thus doth Chriſt direct us how to glorifie God with our teares, how to comfort our ſoul by our mourning, and how to be prepared for any common calamity, and alſo how to meet the day of judgewent with comfort, and that is by mourning for our ſins in time, and by making our peace with God by faith in Chriſt, with the teares of true repentance. Luk. 23. 30.

Now take a view of thy teares and ſee from whence they flow; from an humane principle, or from a principle of grace: if thou canſt mourn for the evill of puniſhment, which thou ſuffereſt, and canſt not mourn for the evill of the ſin which thou committeſt, thy teares are not then ſpent upon the right object; or if thou doſt weep & grieve for thy ſins, and haſt no relation to Chriſt by faith in thy mourning, thou wilt have but little aſſurance of pardon, and thou wilt find but ſmall comfort in thy weeping. Alſo if thou doſt lament and ſorrow for thy ſins, and not fully purpoſe and doſt endeavour to reform thy

thy sinfull life; thy repentance is not sound, and thy sorrow is not unto salvation. So likewise if nature can finde teares for the losse of some deare friend, or for any other worldly losses, and grace can find none to bewail thy self, because the light of Gods countenance is clouded from thee, or because the Church of God is under afflictions and troubles, thou dost then waste thy teares to a wrong end. [a] *Ezra* mourned for the transgression of the people; [b] and *Nehemiah* mourned for the desolation of *Jerusalem*. [c] *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes*, saith *David*, *because they keep not thy Law*. These teares proceeded from a Principle of grace, wherewith God was well pleased. And Christ doth here command us to reserve our teares for general calamities; because then God doth call for fasting, lamentation and mourning; from those especially that are like to partake in such calamities.

Ezra. 10. 6.
Nch. 1. 4.
Psal. 119. 130.

If we can thus regulate our mourning, and thus imploy our teares, it will make much for the glory of God and for the comfort of our own souls.

But the consideration of the dreadfull day of judgement should most of all affect our hearts and soules with a godly sorrow for our sins, and with an holy and earnest desire to be reconciled unto God by faith in Christ, and to have a true assurance of the forgivenesse of them by our repentance, that we may then appear before God without any guilt of sin upon our soules, and without the clamours and accusations of an evill conscience, and then it will be a day of rejoicing to us, and not a day of terrour. But if our soules are to appear with the pollutions and staines of sin, and if our consciences are ready to accuse us, and to prefer a bill of indictment against us, that day will be most terrible and fearfull to us: for when we shall look upon the Judge, we shall see nothing in his countenance but terrour and fury, and we can expect nothing from him, but that dreadfull sentence, of *goe ye cursed into everlasting torments*: on the contrary, if the

the grace of God hath taught us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world; we may then confidently look for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Tit. 2. 12, 13.

Wherefore it concerneth us no leſs than the ſalvation of our ſouls, to make up our account while we live here, which we muſt then give unto God, even to an idle word; becauſe we ſhall be judged according to our works: for after this life is ended, there is no more faith to lay hold on Chriſt, no more hope of ſalvation, and no repentance for ſin. If our account be made up according to our own righteouſneſſe, it will come farre ſhort of that which God requireth, and he will not accept it; but if we can make it up in the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt by faith, then whatſoever is wanting in us will be made perfect by his righteouſneſs in the ſight of God. How pittifull then and miſerable will the condition of unregenerate men be at that day? Who can make perfect their account, ſeeing they have no intereſt in Chriſt? And how can they ſtand before that great and dreadfull Judge, ſeeing he will not then know them? Wherefore we ſhould not neglect to make up our account thus with God every day; becauſe we know not how ſoon we are bereaved of time and grace for it, and the loſſe of one day may indanger our ſalvation. Loſe no time then and no opportunity for this great work of thy ſalvation; [d] but redeem the time which thou haſt loſt, by doubling thy future diligence to mak thy calling and election ſure. [d] 2 Pet. 1. 10.

What Chriſt ſuffered upon the Croſſe.

OUr gracious Redeemer, after many a weary ſtep, is now brought to Mount *Calvary*, which was without the gates of the City, where he muſt finiſh the great work of mans Redemption by his death and reſur-

rection, for to this end he came down from heaven and assumed our nature; and all our iniquities were imputed to him; because he was our surety, and did undertake to satisfie the justice of God for them all, not
Joh. 20. A. 2. 27. onely for the Jew, but also for the Gentile. *Now behold and see how his innocent hands and feet are nailed to his Crosse, and how he is mocked and derided in his misery, how the barbarous people insult over him, how grievously he is tortured, and what execrable blasphemies they belch out against him; he did now endure the bitternesse of pain, and the extremity of cold being naked upon the crosse. but above all the anguish of his soul was so great, because the fierce wrath and hot displeasure of Almighty God was heavy upon him, that he cryed out, *My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me?* for then he had little or no sense of his heavenly Fathers love, and the bright beames of his Deity were clouded for a time from his humanity.

If it be so, that the eternall Son of God our blessed Redeemer suffered all kinde of shame and ignominy, blasphemous words and cruell torments upon the crosse, even to the pouring out of his very heart blood, to purge and cleanse us from the guilt and from the filth of all our sins, and that he suffered whatsoever the malice and power of the devill could inflict upon him, and also that for the time his Divine nature did refuse to minister comfort to his humanity in these his bitter torments; what thankfulnesse then do we ow to our dear Saviour for his wonderfull love to us? What can be too dear for him that did account nothing too dear for us? what duty, what reverence and fear do we ow unto him, who hath paid so great a price for our redemption? Our best expressions of love and duty are no way answerable to that which Christ hath deserved, and which we are bound to perform unto him; yet if they come from a willing minde and from a sincere heart, Christ our Saviour will accept them, and out of his fulnesse will supply,

ply what is wanting in us, and God will be well pleased with it for his sake.

Here is much matter of heavenly comfort for us, if our hearts can devoutly Meditate upon it, and receive it. Our life may be full of misery, and our hearts full of sadnesse, and perplexity, our faith may be so weak that we can have no apprehension of the love and favour of God, and our spirits may be so cast down, that we cannot raise them up towards heaven; we may be pressed with troubles, crosses and sorrowes beyond our strength, and the light of Gods countenance may be so eclipsed, that we can see no token of his grace and favour to sweeten the bitternesse of our sufferings, and to support us under the pressure of them; but we are ready to faint, and to cast off all hope of relief and comfort; [b] but for all this we need not fear, our souls need not be *disquieted within us*: for if we wait on God, he will be our present help, he will be our God and he will not forsake us. The brightnesse of his countenance may be darkened for a few hours, as it was with the Sun at this very same time, *but the Sun of righteousnesse will again appear to us, with healing in his wings*: then we shal see the salvation of the Lord, if we can look up with the eye of faith to our sweet Saviour, who was brought to a lower degree of spirituall desertion in the apprehension of his humane nature, thn we can be; and yet he found a return of the gracious aspect of his Fathers countenance toward him: whereby he hath sanctified and sweetned whatsoever can betide us to sink our spirits, or to shake our faith and confidence in God. If our ear is spiritually bored to hear those dolefull and lamentable words which our Saviour uttered upon the crosse, when he was ready to yeild up his spirit to God his Father, and yet apply them to our selves by faith, we may then draw vertue and power from them to strengthen our faith, and to support our hope in the assurance of his love, that he will not bring us to so low a degree of spiritual desertion,

[b] Psal. 42. 11. Mal. 4. 2.

because

because our weakneſſe will not bear ſo great a tryall; but will make us to hold out to the end by the Almighty power of his eternall Spirit.

Now learn, O my ſorrowful ſoul, ſo to imprint the crucifying of thy dear Saviour in thy heart by faith, that thou maiſt draw grace and vertue from thence to crucifie all thy corruptions, and the evill concupiſcence of thy fleſh, that thine affections may not be carried after worldly vanities, that thine eyes may not delight to gaze upon obſcene ſpectacles, that thine eares may be dull to unſavory ſpeeches, but ſwift to hear words that tend to edification, and that thy tongue may haye no motion to utter any thing that is diſhonourable to God, or hurtfull to thy neighbour. Thus by the power of Chriſt crucified, the world ſhall be crucified to thee, and thou unto the world, if thou doſt truly believe that he was crucified for thee; becauſe it will dull the edge of thine affections to all earthly things, it will work in thee an hatred and deteſtation of all ſinfull pleaſures, and thou wilt daily labour and [e] *ſtrive to mortifie the old man of ſin*, that hath had his habitation in thy boſome above theſe threeſcore years.

[e] Col. 3. 9. Eph. 4. 22.

In thy firſt creation thou wert a lovely creature, beloved of thy God, without ſpot or blemiſh in ſoul, or in body, thou wert beautified and adorned with all graces and holy vertues, revereneed and obeyed of all other creatures here upon earth, and the celeſtiall orbs did caſt no evill aſpects upon thee: but now thou art deformed with ſin, thou art polluted in all the faculties of thy ſoul, and in all the parts of thy body: for thou art ſpiritually blinde, naked and void of all goodneſſe, thou art deaf and dumb to heavenly things, thou art lame and impotent, and canſt not walk in the paths of righteouſneſſe; alſo thou art ſo bent and bowed to the earth, that thou canſt not raiſe up thy heart toward heaven, and ſo full of ſpirituall diſeaſes and infirmities, that there is no ſound part in thee.

But

But this is thy comfort, O my soul, that the blood of thy crucified Redeemer which was spilt upon the crosse, will take away all thy deformities of sin, and will heal all thy spiritual diseases, and his righteousnesse will make thee lovely in the sight of God.

If this be our condition by nature, if we are thus deformed with the guilt of sin, that cleaveth to our souls by our fall in *Adam*, and if we have no meanes to regain our first happinesse in Adams first innocency, but by Christ, and to be cleansed from all our sins but by his blood; then our chief care must be how to injoy Christ, and how to have this great benefit by his blood.

If we are ingrafted into him by faith, we shall injoy him in his whole nature, as he is God and Man, we shall partake with him in all his excellencies and graces, he will work a new creation in us by his Spirit, and a thorough change in all the faculties of our souls, and in all the affections of our hearts, that no sin shall cleave to our souls for our condemnation: for he will also nail the the guilt of all our sins to his crosse, upon which he shed his most precious blood to make an attonement for them all. He will also take away the stains and filth of our sins by his sanctifying grace and holy Spirit, and will put upon us the robe of his own righteousnesse, which will cover all our deformities, and will make us amiable and lovely in the sight of God. By the merit of Christs blood our sins shall never be laid to our charge, by the power of his death we are made able to mortifie and kill the power of sin in us, and the vertue of his resurrection will quicken us up to newnesse of life, and his righteousnesse will restore us to an higher degree of purity and holinesse than we had in our first creation: [f] *for by faith we are baptized into Christ, and have put on Christ,* [g] *and we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones,* and we are confirmed in this blessed condition by his free Spirit, so that we shall never depart from him.

[f] Gal. 3.27

[g] Eph. 5.30

If Christ had not been crucified, and his blood poured

ed out upon the crosse, and if he had not been made a curse for us by that kinde of death; then Gods decree had not been fulfilled, the work of our redemption had not been finished, we had been still under the curse of the Law, the guilt of sin had still rested upon our souls, and all the Prophesies of him had not been fulfilled; also, we could not have had all those great benefits by his death and by the merit of his blood. h *But Christ did humble*
Phil. 2. 8. *himself to the cursed death of the crosse, and there his heart blood was powred out, which made his sacrifice compleat and perfect.*

This made the faith of the penitent thief so famous; because he did imbrace Christ for his Saviour when he was
2 Cor. 2, 2. upon the crosse. i This made *Paul* to prefer the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and him crucified before all humane wisedome; because thereby the Spirit of God did make
Gal. 6. 14 his preaching powerfull and effectuall: k and this made him glory so much in the Crosse of Christ. Wherefore we need not be ashamed of Christ, because he was crucified, and we need not refuse to bear his Crosse after him; because it is the greatest honour of a true Christian, and that which bringeth the greatest comfort to our souls, to be made conformable to Christ in his sufferings.

Now we come to consider what admirable gentlenesse, what great mercy and goodnesse Christ did shew to his persecutors and tormentors, he did practise the same Doctrine which he taught his Disciples in the Mount,
Mat. 5. 44 l *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.* For he gave them not a bitter word, but did patiently and meekly suffer all their barbarous usage and cruelty against him, and when their hearts were inflamed with malice, and their hands laboured to crucifie him, and when the pangs of death were upon him, his tender heart was moved with compassion toward them, and the fountain of his mercy was opened that the sweet streams of his blessing might flow upon them; for

even then he did pray his heavenly Father to remit and and forgive their great sin. [m] *Father, saith he, forgive them, for they know not what they do*: For they were spiritually blinde, and could not see who he was, and their hearts were hardened, that they could not understand nor believe from whence he came, and wherefore he suffered them to put him to such a shameful and cruel death. [m] Luk. 23.

If our dear Saviour was so mercifull to those that brewed their hands in his blood, what heart can then conceive the riches of his mercy and love to his own servants, that love serve and obey him in truth, and with upright hearts? For mercy and tender love are essentially and naturally inherent in him, and there is no end of his goodnesse to all those that be long unto him; his mercy to them goeth along in all his works: for if he doth correct them, it is in mercy for their good, he will not let the rod go out of his own hand: to some he doth but shake the rod, others feel but few stripes; and though some have many stripes, [n] *yet it shall be with judgment, not in his anger; he will not deal with them according, to their sins, nor reward them according to their iniquities, but his mercy will prevail, though his justice be provoked.* [n] Jer. 10.

Wherefore let no poor afflicted soul, that is under his rod, forbear coming unto Christ: for he can take off his visitation when he pleaseth, and he will pity him, as a Father pitieth his childe. Also let no poor sinner that is truly humbled for his sins, be afraid to have recourse unto his Redeemer: for he prayed for such, to procure their pardon, and to bring salvation to their souls. All the riches honours and pleasures that the world affords, can give a sinfull soul no true consolation, if he be troubled and perplexed for his sins; they are all miserable comforters, when the guilt of sin lieth upon the conscience: true comfort and fulnesse of joy is to be found onely in Christ, and in him crucified: for he will take away the guilt of his sins, that they shall not molest, or trouble his conscience, he will help him bear his sorrowes with a

contented patience, he will ſtand by him, and intercede for him, that in his temptations and trials his faith may not fail him, and at laſt he *will wipe away all teares* Rev. 7. 17 Iſa. 25. 8. *from his eyes*. All this, and much more, Chriſt will do for us; for he will alſo ſtand for us againſt all the accuſations of the devil, be they true or falſe; if they be true, he will preſent his own merits to his Father in ſatisfaction for us; if they be falſe, he will give the devil a ſhameful repulſe, and will curb him that he ſhall not hurt us: for Chriſt Jeſus the righteous is our Advo- 1 John 2. 1, 2. cate with the Father, and the propitiation for our ſins, and for the ſins of the whole world.

Conſider in the next place, that Chriſt did now put an end to the Ceremonial Law, for the types and ſhadows did ceaſe when he was ſlain, becauſe he was the ſubſtance of all thoſe ceremonies and ſacrifices. This Heb. 13. 11, 12. was the laſt ceremonie which was to be fulfilled, that *the bodies of thoſe beaſts, whoſe blood was to be brought into the Sanctuary by the High Prieſt for ſin, were burnt without the Camp.* This Ceremony Chriſt fulfilled, *when he ſhed his blood without the gate, that he might ſanctifie the people with his own blood.* For both *Jews* and *Gentiles* were now gathered together at Mount *Calvary*, where Chriſt died, that the people of all Nations might be ſanctified with his blood, if they come unto him by faith to be cleanſed from the guilt of their ſinnes, and purified from their pollutions with his ſanctifying grace. Wherefore now, though we are aliens and ſtrangers to the houſe of *Iſrael*, yet nothing hindereth, but that we may go forth boldly unto him, who finiſhed our redemption by his death without the gate, that thereby he might ſanctifie the *Gentiles* with his blood, as he did the *Jewes*, and therefore he will not refuſe us.

Laſtly conſider, that *Pilate* did highly honour our Lord and Saviour Chriſt, when he wrote this Title to

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be set over his head upon the Crosse, *Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jewes*; which was a title of great honour, and not of shame and disgrace unto him. Their manner was to set up a superscription to shew the crimes why a malefactor was put to death; but *Pilate* could find no crime, and no fault in Christ, and therefore he wrote this superscription to clear his innocencie, and to brand the *Jewes* with perpetual ignominie and shame to all generations, for their malice and cruelty against him. For though *Pilate* did not believe that Christ was a King, and though he was perswaded by the chief Priests, and by the people, to condemn him, and to put him to death; yet God would not suffer him to be perswaded by them to alter the Title, but to have it written in *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latine*, that all Nations and Languages might know the honour of his Person, and the horrible wickednes of the bloudy *Jewes* in killing their King, whom God had appointed and sent to be their Saviour and Redeemer; also to make their name odious to all people, as a just judgement of God upon them, because they refused the sweet tender of his grace and mercy, and killed his dear and onely Son. Christ was brought to the lowest degree of his humiliation, and now God doth begin to glorifie him, and to publish his honour and his great Name by the highest authority to all nations and people, and to the perpetual infamy and reproach of all his enemies to all posterity. This honour was his due, and God would not suffer him to loose it, and thus God will do for us also. If we are made the scorn of men, if we suffer persecution, fire, sword, or famine in a good cause, and if we die upon this crosse, yet God will manifest the integrity of our hearts, and will give us that honour which is due to us, as his servants and his children: for if we drink of Christs bitter cup of sorrows, we shall also drink of his pleasant cup of joy and consolation. Jon 20. 19.

Wherefore if thou wilt have the meditations of thy

heart

heart upon the passion of thy dear and gracious Redeemer, to be comfortable and profitable to thy soul, thou must not look upon him onely in that despicable condition, as he is now upon the crosse to the outward eye; but with the eye of faith thou must look upon him, as he is the eternal Son of God, God and man, and as he is dignified with all his excellencies and titles of honour: for he was a Prophet, and such a Prophet as did endow all the former Prophets with the spirit of prophesie, whose Prophesies did chiefly concern him.

Also he was a Priest after the highest order, whose Priesthood was eternal, according to this of the Psalmist, (Psal. 110. 4.) *The Lord sware and will not repent: Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedeck.*

So likewise, he was a spiritual King to rule his Church, and in the hearts of all his elect, and he did subdue all his enemies under him, and he will also subdue all the enemies of his spiritual Kingdom in us.

If thou canst thus see the excellencies of Christ through his mean and contemptible condition, and if thou canst believe that he is thy Redeemer, and all-sufficient to be thy Saviour, it will inflame the affections of thy heart with intire love to him, because he hath humbled himself so low for thy sake; it will make thee bend thine ear to his instructions; for he will teach thee heavenly wisdom, and how to walk in the paths of godlinesse; he will also present thy prayers, and all thy holy services to God his Father, and then they shall be accepted; and this will also work a reverential fear in thee, to yeild all obedience to his commands. If thou doest thus look upon Christ, though he be upon the crosse, it will give thee abundant comfort in thy sufferings, exceeding much joy in the benefits which thou shalt have by his passion, and it will stirre thee up to a thankful acknowledgement of his goodnesse and mercie to thee.

Now look upon thine own unworthinesse, and thou wilt admire the more, that Christ should so much humble him-

himself to undertake thee, that he should suffer so much smart, pain, and torment, to free thee from everlasting torments and burnings in hell, and that he should loose the comfort of his Deitie, and the sense of his Fathers love, to reconcile thee unto God, and to make an attonement for thy sins.

Who were the Agents in the Passion of CHRIST.

WE come now to consider what Agents there were in this doleful tragedie of our Saviour Christ, how every one acted for his own ends, how God did make the designes of the devil, and of all his wicked instruments, to work for his own glorie; and how he did afterwards bring their wickedness upon their own heads.

The whole Passion of Christ, and every circumstance of it was decreed from eternitie, and the three Persons in the sacred Trinity were the first and principal Agents in this great work of Christs passion: for they decreed, that Jesus Christ the second Person in the holy Trinitie should be sacrificed, and made a propitiation for the sins of the world, which was done at Gods appointed time. For God the Father sent him into the world for this end and purpose, and God the Son gave himself to be a ransome for us, and assumed our nature, that he might fulfil all righteousness, and suffer the whole penalty of the Law for us; also God the holie Ghost did give him all fulness of grace and power to bear the bitterness of his passion, and thereby to conquer sin, death, hell, and the devil, and to give us power also over all the enemies of our salvation. Though God was the principal Agent in the crucifying of Christ, yet herein he had no evil intent or purpose, and therefore he was without sin: for he had a gracious

and merciful end in it, that his justice might be satisfied for the sin of man, and that the redemption and salvation of all his elect might be wrought by the precious bloud, and all-sufficient sacrifice of his dear Son.

But the devil was the chief actor in the wickedness, and cruelty of this said tragedie, whose end and design was to hinder our salvation by destroying our Saviour, and this he did seek to bring to passe by wicked means, and of malice to mankind; and therefore as soon as he had his permission from God, he raised up his wicked instruments for his hellish design.

John 13. 27. First, [a] he entred into *Judas*, and took possession there, [b] who out of covetousness sold his Lord and Ma-
[b] Mat. 26. 15, 16. ster to the chief Priests and Elders for thirtie pieces of silver, and sought opportunitie to betray him unto them.

Then he stirred up the chief Preists and Elders against him, who out of malice and envie did persecute him, and falsly accuse him before *Herod* and *Pilate*, because the people did so much resort unto him.

Pilate condemned him out of fear and flattery to keep his grace and favour with *Cæsar*, and to please the people; for he thought he did it for *Cæsars* honour. The Souldiers crucified him for a reward, and to make a spoil of his garments.

Thus they are all the devils instruments to put the immaculate Lamb of God to a most shameful and cruel death for their own wicked ends. But God did overrule them all by his gracious and wise providence, and made all their purposes and actions to serve for the furthering of his most loving and merciful end, which was decreed from eternitie.

From hence we may draw sweet meditations for our comfort upon the power and goodness of God, who can and will over-rule the power of the devil, and of all wicked men, and will so dispose of all their plots and devices, which they intend for the hurt of his servants, that they shall all serve for his own glorie, and

for their good; he can frustrate their wicked intentions, and can bring about his own end, to effect his own work by them; God hath this provident care of his people, that whatsoever their enemies do maliciously intend or devise against them shall be brought to nought, or else he will make it serve for their advantage and gain. Though our enemies be as strong as [c] *Goliah* was, and though we are as unfit to encounter with them, as *David* was to fight with that great Gyant; yet if we put our confidence in God, as *David* did, and keep close unto him by faith in Christ, he will direct a stone to beat out their brains. And though they be as cunning and as subtile [d] as *Achitophel* was, yet God can confound them in their own craft and policy.

[c] 1 Sam. 17.

[d] 2 Sam. 17.

Mark now and consider it well, how God in justice did revenge the treachery and cruelty that was used in betraying and in murthering of his dear and onely Son, and how he brought their wickedness upon their own heads: for *Judas* was given up to a reprobate minde, [e] *and immediatly after he hanged himself.*

[e] Mat. 27.

God did severely punish the whole nation of the Jews for this most horrible fact, and laid the innocent blood of his Son upon them and upon their posterity, which doth still rest upon them, because they did wilfully without cause and out of malice shed it.

Pilate also was soon after cast out of *Cæsar*'s favour, and banished into *France*; and the Devil was hereby quite vanquished and overcome; so that now he hath no power to hurt the meanest of Gods Saints. Thus will the Lord deal with all those that have their hands stained with the blood of his Anointed ones, and with all such as are Actors in any wicked Design: They may hide their counsels in the dark; yet nothing can be hidden from God: for he hath an All-seeing eye to discover what they go about, and he will bring the evill of their doings upon themselves, or upon their children.

Wherefore have thou no hand in the blood of Gods

servants, and partake not with the wicked in their evill designes: for the guilt of their sins will cleave to thee, and God will not suffer it to go unpunished:
Ps. 5. 6. for if thou art partaker of other mens sins, thou shalt also partake with them in their punishment: Therefore, f *Paul* adviseth the *Ephesians* not to be partakers
Ver. 28. 4. with wicked men, because *the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience* for their sins. God calleth his people out of *Babylon*, saying, g *Come out of her my people that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not*
2 Cor. 1. 5. *of her plagues*. But it is a blessed thing to partake with the children of God in his holy Ordinances, in all holy duties, h and in the sufferings of Christ; Because we shall also partake with them in the consolation that is by Christ.

Thus the servants of God should mutually joyn together in the worship and service of God, that they may also mutually have the benefit, and comfort of those services here, and also partake together with them of the glory that afterwards shall be revealed.

Of the penitent Thief.

NOw we come to consider, that Christ was crucified between two thieves, according to this of the Pro-
Isa. 53. 12. phet, i *He was numbered with the transgressors*; one of them had no remorse of conscience, nor grief of heart for his offences; but began to rail upon Christ, to revile
Luk. 23. 39. him, and blasphemously to taunt him, saying, k *If thou art Christ save thy self and us*. But the other was touched by the holy Ghost with a godly sorrow, and a relenting heart for his sins, and did freely confesse that they two did justly and deservedly suffer death for their offences; but he did justifie our beloved Saviour for his blamelesse innocency, and he rebuked his fellow, saying, *Fearest thou not God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?* Then he turned to Christ to implore his mercy, and made this short and sweet Prayer to him: *Lord, remem-*

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but me whom thou shalt come into thy Kingdom. To whom Christ immediatly gave this gracious Answer, *Verily I say unto thee, This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise:* Surely these gracious words of Christ did much mitigate and asswage the sorrowes of his perplexed minde, and much eased the bitternesse of his torments, and this blessed Promise gave him good assurance, that after his present sufferings and pains, he should injoy the blessed society of Christ in the heavenly paradise. For as Faith wrought in his heart a true contrition to Repentance, and opened his mouth to make a good confession of his sins, and to vindicate the innocency of Christ from the aspersions of his fellow Malefactour; and also to present his humble request unto Christ his Lord, for some gracious remembrance of him: so no doubt it sealed such an holy assurance of future happinesse to his sorrowfull soul and wounded conscience, that he did stedfastly believe the promise, and faithfully lookt for the performance of it: whereby his fainting Spirits were much comforted, and the cruell torturings of his body, which he suffered, were sanctified and sweetned to him.

Here set the Meditations of thy heart upon the free love and mercy of Christ to poor sinners, he choseth whom he will, and whom he will he refuseth; his gifts of grace are free, his love and favour is not necessitated, to any.

[c] There were twinnes in *Rebeccas* wombe, [d] God loved the one and he hated the other. Two men may be in one bed; God may take the one, and he may leave the other: so likewise there were two thieves crucified with Christ, and he had compassion on the one, but he rejected the other: for he bestowes his grace upon whom he will, and when he pleaseth. There is no person so vile, no condition so base, and no time so late as to hinder Christ from shewing mercy to a poor sinner that is truly sensible of his misery, and feels the burden of his sins, and doth humbly acknow-

[c] Gen. 25.
[d] Rom. 13.
[e] Luk. 23. 34.

ledge his miſerable condition, and his unworthineſſe to him, and doth earneſtly ſue for his grace and favour with a broken and a contrite heart, as this Malefactor did. Alſo, Chriſt will not refuſe thoſe that renounce themſelves, and their own merits, and reſt onely upon his righteouſneſſe by faith for their juſtification; & alſo upon the merite of his death for the pardon of their ſins, and for the ſalvation of their ſouls: for his promiſes of grace and mercy are made to ſuch as ſigh and mourn for their tranſgreſſions.

Now examine thy condition with a faithfull heart: art thou a malefactour and a grievous ſinner againſt God? Doth the guilt of thy ſins preſſe heavy upon thee? Doſt deſire from thy heart to be eaſed of that burden? Is the remembrance of them bitter unto thee, though it be when thou art weak and faint, and ready to give up the ghoſt? Then look up to Chriſt with the eye of Faith, confeſſe thy ſins unto him with a penitent heart, and if thine ear be ſpiritually opened, thou wilt then hear a gracious and mercifull anſwer from him to thy Petitions, and if thou wilt diligently ſearch the Scriptures, thou wilt find ſome promiſes of grace which will ſute with thy condition that Chriſt hath made to ſuch as thou art, which thou muſt apply to thy fainting ſoul by true faith, and ſtedfaſt hope that it belongeth unto thee; then reſt upon it with a firm confidence, to comfort thee in the aſſurance of thy reconciliation unto God, which will take away the evill of all thy ſorrowes, and the terrour of death it ſelf; which to a naturall man is moſt uncomfortable, and death is moſt fearfull and terrible to ſuch as ſee the hand-writing of God againſt them: for as they have lived in ſin without repentance; ſo they dye with the guilt of ſin upon their ſouls without forgiveneſſe.

This Act of Chriſt in the converſion of this poor ſinner was extraordinary, and it was a ſpeciall work of mercy to manifeſt his power and goodneſſe to him, even

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at the laſt hour, when he had no hope and no meanes of his ſalvation, and when he was upon the Croſſe expecting death every moment; and alſo it was to ſhew that he is no reſpecter of perſons, and that he is not limited to time, or meanes, when or how to work repentance in the heart of a dejected ſinner, or to ſave any that come unto him with an upright heart, and ſincere affections, though it be immediatly before they go hence, and ſhall be ſeen no more.

For it doth not appear that this man had ever any knowledge of Chriſt, or any opportunity to come unto him, or any means of grace before this time, or that he did wittingly and wilfully defer the time of his ſalvation, or neglect the means of grace to the laſt hour, or deſperately reſerve the hope of his Redemption to the time of his death. But though it were late before this Malefactor was converted, or had any true ſaving grace wrought in him, or before he did believe in Chriſt; yet his faith was true, [f] and he made a good confeſſion of his ſins, and did juſtifie the innocency of Chriſt in that inſtant of time when none of his friends durſt ſpeak in his cauſe, and his Apoſtles either doubted or ſeemed to ſtagger in their faith of his Divinity. Alſo, this mans converſion was at ſuch a time, as that he could neither be baptized, nor have further time for the amendment of his ſinfull life.

[f] Luk. 23. 41.

Here is much matter of Spirituall comfort, if we duly conſider how powerfull true faith is to prevail with Chriſt in all our troubles, ſorrowes and neceſſities: for if we reſt and depend upon him, and if our hope and confidence be onely in him, let our condition of life be what it will, he will not deceive us in our hope, nor leave us without ſupport and comfort; alſo, if he findeth faith and truth in our hearts, he will deny us no good thing that we crave of him, be it never ſo great, or begged never ſo late: for this poor ſinner begged heavenly happineſſe at the very laſt hour of his life, when he had no time to expreſſe any thankfulneſs for ſo great a bleſ-

sing, and yet he had his request granted.

But this particular Act of Christs mercy makes no generall rule for remission of sins to those that do wilfully defer their repentance and turning to God to the last and worst part of their lives: not that Christ is not alwayes ready to receive the truly humbled, and repenting sinner, but because late repentance is seldome found. God will not bestow this heavenly grace at their pleasure, who do willingly neglect the meanes of grace, and lose the opportunity that God hath given them for it, and do rather choose to continue still in their sins, than to leave and forsake them, and to turn to the Lord with all their heart, and with all their soul.

We cannot but dayly see what meanes the Lord useth to bring us unto Christ, and to make us get an holy assurance of the pardon of our sins through him by true repentance: his Law doth shew us the deformity of our sins, and what we have justly deserved thereby, which is a forcible means to drive us unto Christ, by him to have Redemption from the curse of the Law? the sense of our sins, and the anguish of our Spirits for them are strong motives to make us seek to our crucified Redeemer, that they may be washt away in his blood, which he shed upon the crosse.

Also the smart of his rod in our troubles, sorrowes and afflictions are speciall means which God is pleased to use to bring us to repentance; but specially if we finde by the manner of his visitation, that it is for some particular sins which we have committed, we ought then speedily to repent of them, and to seek after the blood of Christ, to apply it to our selves by faith, that the guilt of such sins may not cleave to our souls and consciences, but that those spiritual wounds which they have made in us may be quickly healed, before they come to putrid sores and ulcers, and we may have a true assurance hereof by our repentance.

If repentance be truly wrought in us, there will be such

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an holy change in all the faculties of our ſouls, in all the affections of our hearts, and in all the parts of our bodies, that the corruptions of our Nature, and the ſinfull luſts of our fleſh will be mortified, and the power of ſin will be killed in us, that by the ſanctifying Grace of the holy Ghoſt we may be raiſed up to newneſſe of life.

If we did ſeriouſly conſider theſe things, we ſhould not keep at ſo farre a diſtance from Piety and vertue, and we ſhould not be ſuch ſtrangers to a Chriſtian life and converſation; but we would uſe all means to get into nearer ſociety with Chriſt by true ſaving faith, and by heavenly contemplation, that the ſpirituall dew of his heavenly graces may diſtill into our hearts to ſanctifie us throughout, both in ſoul and in body, that in Chriſt we may be made new creatures.

To this end we muſt endeavour to keep our faith ſtill in action, and continually to uſe it upon all occaſions, and in every condition of life: for thereby we ſhall draw ſtrength and power from Chriſt to carry us on through all temptations and tryalls, and to ſupport and comfort us in all ſorrows and tribulations; it will purifie our hearts from dead works, and ſuffer no ſin to continue with us without repentance, to hinder the ſalvation of our ſouls.

This rare example of the goodneſſe and mercy of Chriſt to this believing Thief, may keep us from deſpair, becauſe there is mercy for a ſinfull ſoul, if at any time he doth truly repent, and turn to the Lord with a full intent and purpoſe of will to reform his evill, it doth alſo teach us not to be ſecure, or careleſſe of our ſalvation: for it is extreamly dangerous to looſe any opportunity of grace that God ſhall give us, or to take ſo much liberty to ſin as to forget to make our Peace with God in time: for we muſt give an account at the laſt day of all that we have done in the fleſh, and our condition then wil be moſt miſerable, if our reckoning be not made perfect

[1] Ezech. 18. 21, 22.

perfect in the righteousnesse of Christ by faith while we lye here upon earth, and therefore it is the greatest punishment in this life to have no sense of our spirituall misery, and not to fear or remember the dreadfull day of judgement. Also, this consideration should keep us from rash judgement; and censuring of any mans condition, though he be a notorious sinner: for God can give him grace to repent when he pleaseth.

As this one example of the mercy of Christ to this penitent sinner may keep us from despair, from security and from rash judging of others; so let it keep us from presuming upon sin in hope of pardon; we do wilfully delay our repentance from day unto day, and so continue impenitent to the last part of our life, because this man had all his sins forgiven even in a moment, and was received to mercy at the last hour: for God may justly deny us mercy, if we refuse grace when the means is offered to us. So likewise let it keep us from presuming upon repentance, because it is not in our power to repent when we will.

This heavenly grace is the gift of God, and it is the first fruits of faith, which the holy Ghost will work in us, if we are ready to yield obedience to his holy inspirations, or to make the right use of such meanes, as he is pleased to use, to make us willing to seek unto him for it: for if the Spirit of God doth not work it in us, we can have no hope ever to obtain it.

Now consider the strength of faith that was in this poor sinner, he gave the highest title of honour to Christ when he we was scornfully mocked, and in a most contemptible condition to the eye of all men; he did imbrace him and vindicate his honour when he was upon the crosse, he did believe that heaven was his Kingdom, though he were now reviled and despised of all men, and that he had the disposing of all honours and preferments in that Kingdom which made him pray unto him, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdome*; also, his heart

heart was touched with a ſenſible feeling of his ſins, he made a pious confeſſion of them, and therefore he did pray for mercy out of a true ſenſe of his miſery.

If we can ſhew the faith of this penitent Thief, though our life hath been as vicious as his was, and though we turn to Chriſt late as he did; yet we may have good hope of the pardon of our ſins, and we may comfortably expect his felicity, for Chriſt will return the like gracious anſwer to our Prayers, and the like promiſe of future happineſſe.

But what faith can we ſhew if we ſtill diſhonour Chriſt with our words, and works? how can we truſt in him, if we do not believe that all regall power both in heaven and in earth is given unto him? And how can we hope for future bleſſedneſſe from him, if we are not confident that he is the diſpoſer of all the glorious manſions that are in heaven; what godly ſorrow have we for our ſins, if we ſtill go on in a preſumptuous way of ſinning? And what hope is there of true repentance if we ſtill cheriſh & foſter our ſins in our boſome? if our faith and repentance be no better then thus, Chriſt will not hear our Prayers, nor grant our requeſts.

Wherefore let not the devill delude thee with ſecurity or preſumption leſt he brings thee to perdition; for many have periſhed with the ſhadow of this deceitful hope.

Look well to the truth of thy faith, that it be well grounded upon the true knowledge of Chriſt, and of thoſe excellencies that are in him, that thou maiſt firmly reſt upon him in all troubleſome and dangerous times; but chiefly for the redemption of thy ſoul.

Neglect not the means of grace, and defer not thy repentance: for God hateth ſuch as upon confidence of repentance in their old age, do preſume to ſin the more freely, as if God did not know the deceit and hypocriſie that is in their hearts.

If thou doſt flatter thy ſelf in thy wickedneſſe, and doeſt bleſſe thy ſelf in thy heart, ſaying, *I ſhal have peace, though* [a] Deut. 29. 19, 20.

though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to ad drunken et to thirst: then know that the Lord will not spare thee, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousie shall smoke against thee, and all the curses that are written in his book shal lye upon thee, and the Lord shall blot out thy Name from under heaven.

Consider further how much this penitent sinner was humbled in the sense of his sins, and of his unworthinesse, and also how bountifull and good Christ was to him: for he durst not presume to beg any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ; but onely some remembrance of him, when he came into his Kingdome; but Christ did grant him a present possession of his Kingdome, *Verily, I say, unto thee, To day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.*

This Paradise was the place of blessednesse, where all the Saints of God shall be untill the generall resurrection, whereof the earthly paradise was but a shadow. [i] This blessed place is in the presence of God, where we shall have fullnesse of joy, and it is at Gods right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore.

Psal. 16. 11.

[k] Thus is Christ abundant in goodnesse and in truth, if we have but little comfort in this short time of our life, yet when we come to the end of our dayes we shall have fulnesse of joy in the Paradise of God together with Christ our Saviour for evermore Wherefore though this life be full of vexations and troubles, the meditation and hope of heavenly happinesse, which we shall hereafter injoy to all eternity, will sweeten the bitternesse of all our momentany afflictions and tribulations.

Exod. 34. 6.

Now comfort thy self, O penitent sinner, if thou art so cast down in the apprehension of thy sins, that thou darest not come into the presence of God in regard of Divine justice, [l] or lift up thine eyes unto heaven with the poor publicane, to crave what thou wantest or desirest, because thou hast justly incurred his high displeasure by thy manifold transgressions; yet be not disheartned

[l] Luk. 18. 13.

ned, faint not, but come cheerfully to Christ with true faith, and firm confidence to be received: for he will open a Fountain to thee from whence all Divine mercy floweth, and thou wilt find him alwayes ready and willing to accept of thee: make thy condition therefore truly known unto him, put up thy prayers and supplications to him, and though thou desireſt but a drop of comfort; yet he will give thee abundant conſolation in what thou ſuffereſt, and much more than thou deſireſt.

By the example of this Malefactor, we may draw holy Meditations upon the Divine Nature of true faith for our inſtruction and comfort: for it looketh beyond the eye of reaſon, and above the reach of nature, it maketh us evidently to apprehend that which our reaſon or naturall capacity cannot ſhew us, and it will make us believe in hope, even againſt hope, that which is impoſſible to nature, and incredible to humane reaſon. This miſerable ſinner had no reaſon to believe in Chriſt, and to confide in him for his ſalvation: for we do not read that ever he heard his preaching, or ſaw any of his miracles; but he ſaw him now ready to dye an ignominious and curſed death upon the croſſe, and he heard him thus reviled, [m] *If thou be the Son of God come down from the croſſe.* Alſo, he heard him mocked in this manner by the chief Prieſts and Elders, *He ſaved others himſelf he cannot ſave: if he be the King of Iſrael let him come down from the croſſe, and we will believe in him; He truſted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he ſaid, I am the Son of God.* [m] Mat. 27. 39.

Though theſe and the like blaſphemous words were ſpoken in deriſion againſt him, which were ſufficient in all reaſon to keep back this Malefactor from truſting in him; yet the holy Ghoſt did ſo work upon his heart, that he did faithfully believe that Chriſt was the Son of God, that he was the King of *Iſrael*, that he had ſaved others, and therefore he could ſave him alſo, which made

him to apply himself to Christ for comfort, and for his salvation, and in his addresses to him, he came with all modesty and humble submission, he gave him all due honour and reverence, as much as he was then able to expresse, and then he made this humble suite and supplication to him: and no sooner was his request made but it was granted, because Christ did see truth and sincerity in his heart, and integrity in his expressions.

We may observe from hence for our instruction and consolation, that the holy Ghost can work the conversion of a sinner, either without meanes, or by contrary meanes, he doth sometimes work very strangely upon the will and upon the affections of the heart: for Christ was now preached by his deadly foes out of scorn and mockery; [n] as there were some in *Pauls* time that did preach Christ even of envy and strife; others of love and good will; yet the Spirit of God did so enlighten the understanding of this sinfull man, and did so work upon his will, and so seasoned his heart with saving grace, that he received holy instruction thereby, and what the enemies of Christ did speak in his disgrace, he did apply it to himself, to confirm him in the truth of his Divinity, which made him stick close to him by faith, when he was in the lowest degree of his humiliation: his faith made him rest upon Christ and upon his promise above the strength of nature, and contrary to all humane reason.

Phil. 1 15

If he had seen the glory of Christ in his transfiguration upon Mount *Tabor*, and if he had seen some of his great miracles, or had heard his Divine Doctrine, and powerfull Preaching, his faith had not seemed so great; but now he did see him onely upon Mount *Calvary*, nailed to his crosse, as the worst of Malefactors are, and rejected of his own nation; so that to the outward eye he appeared nothing else, but a pitiful spectacle of woful misery; and yet this penitent sinner did expresse an admirable faith in the pangs of a cruell and violent death, though

though his faults had been intolerable in his dissolute life: for nothing but faith could move him to honour and reverence Christ; now he was in this sad condition, and to sue unto him to be remembred in his Kingdome. By the eye of his faith he did see in Christ more than humane meeknesse and patience in his sufferings, undaunted courage above the strength of nature, to go thorough with all constancy those torturings and torments, which with all cruelty and malice were inflicted upon him: and he did see some glympse of Divine mercy in him, when he heard him pray so graciously for his persecutors, and tormentors, and for those that put him to death.

In the last place, ponder well in thy heart upon the mercifull answer of Christ to this penitent Malefactor, *Verily, I say unto thee, To day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*; whereby he did shew his power to forgive sins upon earth.

Thus he said to the sick of the palsie, *o Son thy sins are forgiven thee*: and hereby also he did shew that he had power to dispose of heaven at his own pleasure: p for *all power was given to him both in heaven and in earth*: therefore he did assure this Petitioner, that though his body did now suffer the torments of a cruell death; yet his soul should live and presently injoy a most happy and blessed condition in the Paradise of God, and in the mansions of heaven to all eternity, which place q Christ hath prepared for his servants.

o Mar. 2. 5. 10.

p Mat. 28. 18.

q John 14. 2.

We shal meet with labour and toil, troubles and crosses in this life, which do imbitter all our comforts here; but when we shall injoy this heavenly Paradise, r the Spirit saith, that *we shall rest from our labours, and we shall feel no more sorrow: our bodies shall sleep in the dust untill the generall resurrection; but our souls shall rest in joy and happinesse for evermore.*

r Rev. 14. 13.

Though we live a restlesse and uncomfortable life in this world, it will be but for a short time; but in the world to come we shall have fulnesse of joy and felicity

with Chriſt, and with his holy Angels and bleſſed Saints in heaven, which never ſhall have an end.

Conſider alſo, that Chriſt did preſently grant his requeſt, and did ſuddenly perform his promiſe: for God doth ſometimes anſwer the deſires of our hearts before we ſpeak, and he will give what we need before we ask. When *Daniel* prayed for the reſtauration of *Jeruſalem*, God anſwered him before he had made an end of his pray-
Dan. 9. 21 ers, [f] and cauſed his Angel *Gabriel* to flye ſwiftly to touch him, and to inform him of the time when *Jeruſalem* ſhould be reſtored.

But ſometimes it is long before we have a return of our prayers, becauſe God will try our patience, and conſtancy in waiting his good pleaſure, and by his delayes to make us more fervent in our ſupplications: for he loves an holy importunity.

1 Sam. 1. [g] *Hannah* continued long before the Lord in praying for a childe, before ſhe obtained her requeſt. Alſo, God doth ſometimes long delay the performance of his promiſe to try our faith and confidence in him; as he did to *Abraham* for diverſe years, before he gave him a child by *Sarah* his wife; and alſo before he delivered his people out of *Egypt*. Wherefore faint not in thy prayers, for what thou deſireſt, neither be weak in faith, if thou haſt a promiſe from God, but reſt upon it with an aſſured hope; for he will chooſe the fitteſt time to anſwer thy Prayers, and to perform his promiſe, which may moſt advance his own glory, and be beſt for thy good.

Of the Virgin Mary.

NOw did the ſorrowes of this bleſſed Virgin begin, when ſhe ſaw her dearly beloved Son in this lamentable condition upon the croſſe, and heard the blaſphemies and reproaches both of the Jews and Gentiles, ſhe ſaw how the barbarous people did inſult over him, and what

what cruell tormens were inflicted upon every part of his body, and that he was now ready in this extremity of misery to give up the Ghost.

[a] Now was old *Simeons* Propheſie fulfilled, now did *a ſword peirce thorough her ſoul*, [b] *he was now ſet for the fall and riſing again of many in Iſrael; and for a ſign which ſhall be ſpoken againſt*: If Chriſt had not ſtrengthened her faith, ſhe had been ſwallowed up of too much grief and ſorrow, for her tender heart could not indure to ſee the barbarous inhumanity and ſavage cruelty that her dear Son ſuffered, whom ſhe knew to be innocent and juſt, and free from any offence. For no doubt Chriſt had formerly revealed to her, [c] as he did to his Diſciples both by his words and by his Spirit what he ſhould ſuffer at *Jeruſalem*; and it was ſo decreed by God his Father for the redemption of man, that their faith and confidence in him might be ſtrengthned; alſo, that God ſent him into the world for this very end and purpoſe, that he might work the ſalvation of all his Elect by his death. And that the holy Virgin might be the better armed to bear her great afflictions at this time, ſhe knew him to be the eternall Son of the living God, though he was cloathed with her fleſh; and therefore he was able to bear whatſoever ſhould be inflicted upon him, and that he ſhould ſuffer no more than what was decreed in the ſecret Counſel of God. She was alſo fully perſwaded, that though they did kill him; yet he would riſe again the third day according to his own words, in conqueſt and triumph over all his enemies, maugre all their power and policy to prevent it.

[a] Luk. 2. 35.
[b] Iſa. 8. 14.
[c] Mat. 16. 21. 33, 34.

The bleſſed Virgin did ponder theſe things in her minde, ſhe laid them up in her heart, and did faithfully believe them, which did much ſweeten her ſorrowes, and mitigate the anguiſh of her ſoul, and hereby ſhe did bear her afflictions with the more contented patience.

Thus will he ſtrengthen his ſervants with Chriſtian fortitude, and will furniſh them with ſpirituall abilities when they

they are to encounter with any hard tryall, and he will give them heavenly comforts for their encouragement, when they ſuffer any ſorrowes or afflictions for his ſake: for they are all as dear unto him as his Mother was. Wherefore if we are in any diſtreſſe, or put upon any ſervice which is above the ſtrength of nature, we muſt look upon the Almighty power of Chriſt with the eye of Faith, as he is God as well as Man, and upon his goodneſſe and tender love to all his ſervants, and alſo upon Gods eternall decree and wiſe providence, that nothing can be impoſed uponus, but what was preordained & foreſeen by God himſelf for his own glory, and then Chriſt our bleſſed Redeemer will fit us for it: and if it be too hard for us to undergo, he will direct and aſſiſt us with his Spirit in it; alſo, if the burden be too heavy for our ſtrength to bear, he will either leſſen the burden, or increaſe our ſtrength, or elſe he will act the part of the *Cyrenian*, and take it off from us in his good time.

The beſt of Gods ſervants can claim no Priviledge from croſſes, ſorrowes and afflictions in this life: for they muſt paſſe thorough many tribulations, before they come to their eternall reſt in heaven

God hath many gracious ends in ſuffering his ſervants to be tempted, to be tryed, to be buffeted and afflicted; and whatſoever the inſtruments which he uſeth do intend againſt them; yet he will fruſtrate their wicked deſignes, and will effect his own work for his own glory, and for their good.

2 Cor. 12. 7, 9. *S Paul* had his temptations and his buffetings by the meſſenger of Satan, to keep him from ſpirituall pride through the abundance of revelations, and to manifeſt the power of God in his weakneſſe, and the grace and favour of Chriſt in ſuſtaining him in his ſufferings. How ſtrangely was *Abrahams* faith and *Jobs* patience tryed? How was God glorified thereby? And how were they rewarded for their obedience and conſtancy? What afflictions did the Iſraelites ſuffer in the wilderneſs,

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and yet they were but the corrections of a loving Father, to a ſtiffenecked ſon? For thus ſaith *Moſes* to them: [c] *Thou ſhalt alſo conſider in thine heart, that as a man chaſteneth his ſon, ſo the Lord thy God chaſteneth thee.* Holy *David* did often feel the ſmart of Gods rod, and he found much good and comfort by it. [f] *Before I was afflicted, (* ſaith he) *I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy word.* Alſo he ſaith, [g] *Thy rod and thy ſtaffe they comfort me*; and then he concludes thus. [h] *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, O Lord.* This exhortation the wiſe man giveth, [i] *My Son deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord: neither be weary of his correction, for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the ſon in whom he delighteth.* [k] But no chaſtening for the preſent ſeemeth joyous, but grievous: nevertheleſſe afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſſe, unto them which are exerciſed thereby. Wherefore we muſt not meaſure the love of God by the outward bleſſings which we injoy, nor his diſpleaſure by the croſſes which we ſuffer.

c Deut. 8. 5.
f Pſal. 119. 67.
g Pſal. 23. 4
h Pſal. 94. 12
i Prov. 3. 11, 12.
k Heb. 12. 11.

Conſider now, that none could ever claim greater priviledge from afflictions and ſorrowes, than the Virgin *Mary*, and none was ever more to be honoured upon earth than ſhe: for ſhe did bear Chriſt the only Son of the eternal God in her bleſſed womb, who had the command of all creatures in heaven and in earth, and who was the fountain of all true conſolation, and ſhe injoyed the comfort of his ſacred ſociety many years, and yet ſhe had her cares, ſhe had her ſorrowes, her whole life was full of afflictions, wants and neceſſities, ſhe was put to great extremities when Chriſt was born, ſoon after ſhe fled into *Egypt* for the ſafety of her Sons life, ſhe loſt him three dayes at *Jeruſalem*; and at that time ſhe ſought him with a ſorrowfull heart.

But above all behold and ſee how her ſoul is now pierced thorough with grief: for ſhe muſt now loſe his gracious company for ever, ſhe now beholds him

upon the Croſſe, ſhe ſeeth how his tender body is rent and torn with the thornes, and with the whip, how his hands and feet are nailed to the Croſſe, as if he had been a notorious malefactor, and ſhe hears the revilings and blaſphemies that were uttered againſt him in a moſt ſhameful & ſpiteful manner, which was enough to break her ſorrowfull heart; but eſpecially ſhe did ſee his very heart blood guſh out of his ſide, which was pierced with a ſpear. This was the wofull and lamentable condition of the bleſſed Virgin at this time; but Chriſt gave her inward comfort and ſtrength of faith anſwerable to the greatneſſe of her ſorrowes, which did uphold her heart from fainting, and her ſoul from ſinking.

This may be the condition of any of Gods ſervants, they may be oppreſſed and preſſed down with temporall miſeries, they may drink deep in the bitterneſſe of them; but yet they are freed from the curſe that was upon them, and there is nothing in them to hurt their ſouls; for that is taken away by theſe ſufferings of Chriſt, which makes the burden of them more eaſie, that they may bear it with a willing minde.

When our afflictions are thus ſanctified, we ſhall find the fruit and benefit that comes thereby to be very ſweet and profitable, ſo that we ſhall have good cauſe to rejoice under them: for as our ſorrowes and ſufferings do abound; *ſo alſo grace ſhall ſuperabound,* [1] *and as the ſufferings of Chriſt abound in us, ſo our conſolation alſo aboundeth by Chriſt.*

[1] 2 Cor. 1. 5.

Conſider yet further, that as the holy Virgin was continually exerciſed under the Croſſe, and had her ſhare in common calamities; ſo likewiſe ſhe had her particular cares of want and ſcarcity: for her condition of life was but mean, and her livelihood was but ſmall: therefore ſhe was now like to be left deſtitute of all comfort, relief and ſuccour. But Chriſt her beloved Son takes care of her, he provides as well for the maintainance

tainance of her body, as for the comfort of her ſoul, and commends her to *John* his beloved Diſciple. *Woman*, ſaith he, to his Mother, *behold thy Son*, and to *John* he ſaid, *Behold thy Mother*. And from that hour *John* took her unto his own home, and provided for her during her life. m Joh. 19. 26, 27.

Thus was the bleſſed Virgin trained up in the ſchool of affliction and ſorrow, to keep her from ſpirituall pride, though ſhe were honoured and bleſſed above all other women; and that her minde ſhould not be drawen away after the pomp and vanitis of the world, but ſtill to bear Chriſt in her heart, as ſometimes ſhe did bear him in her wombe. It was alſo to free her from all earthly cares, that the meditations of her heart might be alwayes heavenly, and that the deſire of her ſoul might be to be with Chriſt.

This care Chriſt will have to provide whatſoever is needfull for all thoſe that belong unto him: for he beſt knoweth what is good for us, and he will not ſuffer us to want, if we put our truſt in him. We need not carke and care for the tranſitory things of this life, which are given to the wicked as well as to the godly: We need not diſtruſt the wiſe Providence of God; but we may confidently reſt upon Chriſt: for he will ſupport and comfort us in our tribulations, and will provide for us in our wants and neceſſities: troubles and ſorrowes may come upon us, loſſe of Parents, Children, or Friends will come, and caſualties may happen in our eſtate, which we would neither foreſee nor prevent: theſe and the like will imbitter all the comfort and content that we can finde in this world; but if we belong unto Chriſt, we ſhall never loſe him, neither can any thing bereave us of the ſweet conſolation that we ſhall finde in him.

This we may believe to be true, that our croſſes and ſufferings in this life may be better for us then to injoy all earthly pleaſures and delights. n *Moſes refuſeth to*

[n] Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26. *be called the ſon of Pharaohs daughter, chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to injoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon: eſteeming the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures in Egypt: for he had reſpect unto the recompence of the reward.* [o] *Then lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees:* Let not outward croſſes or afflictions too much ſeaze upon thee; but by faith have reſpect unto the recompence of the reward, and raiſe up thy Meditations to Spirituall things, ſet the affections of thy heart upon Chriſt, and him crucified, which will make thy life comfortable here, and will bring thee to reign eternally with him hereafter.

[o] Heb. 12. 12

Now we muſt learn how to draw true conſolation to our ſouls from this eternal Fountain of comfort, when outward calamities or anguiſh of ſpirit doth overpreſſe us. Our worldly preferments, our natural endowments, humane learning, or common grace cannot reach this Fountain, the well is deep, and nothing can reach it but true Faith, which is the onely bucket to draw this water of comfort from Chriſt, which will refreſh our ſouls when they are thirſty and dry: heaven will then ſmile upon us, though the world frownes; the inward man will feel comfort and conſolation, though the outward man be miſerably tortured and tormented with the vexations, and miſeries that are incident to this life. Wherefore every pain and grief that we feel, and every croſſe and affliction that we ſuffer, ſhould make us have a greater deſire to ſome of this water, [p] than *David* had to drink of the water of the well of *Bethlehem*, which was by the gate. Alſo, if we will draw comfort to our ſelves from this heavenly Fountain, we muſt then comfort the comfortleſſe, [q] *we muſt feed the hungry, viſit the ſick, cloath the naked, and relieve the oppreſſed*; then Chriſt will comfort us in our diſtreſſes, and he will provide for us in our neceſſities. [r] *The young lyons may lack and ſuffer hunger, but we ſhall not want any good thing.*

[p] 2 Sam. 23. 15.

[q] Mat. 25. 35.

[r] Pſal. 34. 10

Chriſt

Christ was [r] this Fountain which God promised *should be opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness*, and it was opened when this blessed Virgin saw the blood and water gush out of his side, which was pierced with the Spear, to take away the guilt of sin that doth wound our souls, and to wash away the filth of sin that doth pollute and defile our consciences. No darts of Satan can be so fiery against a poor sinner, but this blood can quench them, no wound can be so deadly, or so deep in the soul, but this blood can search it, and cure it, if it be rightly applyed by Faith, whereof we may have an holy assurance by our repentance and newness of life. [r] Zech. 13.

Wherefore here is much comfort for a poor languishing soul, that is doubtful of the pardon of his sins, if his Faith can perswade him that Christ Jesus was crucified for him, and that this Fountain was opened for his cure: for without this holy perswasion nothing can truly comfort us in our spirituall afflictions.

Faith will give us this holy assurance, if by the vertue and power thereof we can say with holy *Paul*, [t] *By the crosse of our Lord Jesus Christ the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.* [t] Gal. 6. 14.

Hereby we have power to mortifie our evill concupiscence, and all our sinful lusts, that they may have no dominion over us, to lead us captive unto destruction.

Lastly we may learn by the Example of our blessed Saviour, that it is a pious duty which God requireth, for children to provide for their needy, or aged parents according to their ability, both in their life and at their death; and this is part of that thankfulness, which they ow to their parents, and which God hath commanded them to perform: for next under God we ow our selves, and whatsoever we have unto them; we had our being, our breeding, and our education from them; can any expression of thankfulness then be

be too much for them? If God hath blessed us with plenty and with increase, it was for our parents sakes, to relieve and succour them in their age, and in their necessity; or else it was because they were faithfull to God in his worship and service, and therefore God hath poured down his blessings upon us their children, as it hath been his usuall custome so to do. Wherefore if God hath dealt bountifully with us, and but sparingly with our parents, we are both bound by the Law of God, and by the law of nature, to supply their wants according to our power.

As God hath communicated some part of his own honour to our Parents, by giving them the Title of Father, to preserve the preheminence which he hath given them over their children; so he hath bound the children by a strict command to honour their Parents, and to expresse it by their reverence, obedience and thankfulnesse to them for what they have received from them which they cannot perform as they ought, if they do withdraw any thing from their due honour, and dignity, or their helping hand from them in their necessity. Children are not bound thus to honour their Parents onely in their minority, or so long as they are under their tuition and government: for the Commandement of God doth not limit it to these times; but it gives the Father & the Mother this honor so long as they have any child living; and there is a promise of a great blessing annexed to this Commandement. Children may come to be greater in worldly honours and preferments then their Parents; and yet they have no priviledge against this Command of God. Thus saith
Eph. 6. 1. Paul, [a] *Children, obey your Parents in the Lord: for this is right*: and then he citeth Gods Commandement which bindes them to this obedience.

Luk. 2. 51. [a] Christ himself was subject to his Parents, untill his heavenly Fathers businesse called him away, and now at his death he takes order for his Mothers maintenance

nance. Wherefore, if children do thus expreſſe their thankfulneſſe to their Parents, and do thus honour and obey them according to the Example of Chriſt; then God will provide for them and their children, and will perform his promiſe of long life, and of bleſſings, both temporall and eternall: on the contrary, God will curſe the children that diſhonour their Parents, and are in this kind unthankfull to them, both in this life and in the life to come.

The darkning of the Sun.

NOw behold how God did ſhew a miraculous ſign of his high indignation againſt the cruelty of the bloody *Jews* and barbarous *Gentiles* to his onely Son, and how much he did hate and abhor their abominable ſin: [a] *For the Sun was then totally darkned at mid-day, and ſo continued for the ſpace of three houres*, which was a far greater darkneſſe than could be by any eclipſe, as if it had diſdained to look upon, and mourned to ſee ſuch an horrible fact as was then committed in crucifying the Lord of glory. [a] Mat. 27.

Hereby alſo was ſignified how the glory [b] of the Sun of righteouſneſſe was then darkned: [c] *There was no beauty in him, and no comelineſſe that we ſhould deſire him.* Chriſt was then in the extremity of his paſſion: for the flood-gates of Gods wrath were ſet open upon him, and the bright beams of his heavenly Fathers countenance were clouded from him, which he could not regain untill he had fully ſatisfied his juſtice for the guilt of our ſins, which he had taken upon himſelf, and which did moſt obſcure his tranſcendent beauty, which was naturally in him. [b] Mal. 4. [c] Iſa. 53.

All this Chriſt hath ſuffered for us, that God might look favourably upon us, and th attheguilt of our ſins might be done away by faith in his blood; alſo, that

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the ſpots and pollutions of them might be waſht away in the Laver of Regeneration, and newneſſe of life.

This miraculous darkning of the Sun was alſo an evident ſign to the *Jews* of their unbelief, and to ſhew the blindneſſe of their underſtanding, the obſtinacy of their will, and that they were given up to a reprobate mind, as a juſt judgement of God for their unbelief, and for this their loud crying ſin, in which ſad condition they
2 Cor. 3. 13, 14. continue even to this day: [d] for their mindes were blinded, and in the reading of the Old Teſtament there was a vail upon their heart; ſo that they could not ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that which is aboliſhed, which vail is not yet taken away from them. This was typified by that vail which *Moſes* put over his face,
Exod. 34. 33. when he was come down from the Mount, and from the Preſence of God.

In the dayes of *Samuel* God did ſhew a manifeſt token of his high diſpleaſure againſt his people for
1 Sam. 12. 17. their great ſin, [e] when he ſent thunder and rain in the time of wheat harveſt, to let them know that their wickedneſſe was great in the ſight of the Lord, in asking
Sam. 8. 7. them a King, [f] *becauſe they had rejected the Lord, that he ſhould not reign over them.*

God will ſet his mark upon obſtinate and rebellious ſinners, that will not be reclaimed, and turn to the Lord, as he did upon *Cain* and others, to brand them with perpetuall infamy and ſhame for their impenitency. God hath alſo ſeverall judgements for wicked men, as we may ſee by daylyexperience in theſe ſinfull times: Some he marks for the ſword, ſome for famine, others for the peſtilence, ſudden death, or the like; upon whomſoever his mark is ſet, there the judgement will fall.

God hath likewiſe his mark of preſervation, which he will ſet upon his own ſervants in times of mortality,
Ezek. 9. 4. or of any other common calamity: [h] for when he ſendeth

deth forth his deſtroying Angel in a general calamity to deſtroy thouſands, he will alſo in much mercy ſend forth another Angel to mark and ſeal thoſe in their foreheads, who are to be preſerved, that whatſoever the calamity be, it may not hurt them.

Conſider now how uncomfortable it is to want the light of the Sun, and what little joy we can take in this life, if we want the light of our eyes, and then we ſhall ſee that it is much more uncomfortable to want the ſpirituall light of our underſtanding. Thus ſaith Chriſt, *i The light of the body is the eye, if therefore thine eye be ſingle, thy whole body ſhall be full of light: But if thine eye be evill, thy whole body ſhall be full of darkneſſe. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkneſſe, how great is that darkneſſe?* i Mat. 6. 22, 23.

Wherefore, if the Sun of righteouſneſſe doth not ſhine upon us, to give light to our underſtanding; if he doth not heal the perverſeneſſe of our will, and the ſinfulneſſe of our affections, we ſhall walk in darkneſſe and in the ſhadow of death: for we ſhall be without a guide to keep us from ſtumbling, and falling dangerouſly into groſſe ſins, wherein if we continue without repentance, we may juſtly fear ſome judgement of God to fall on us, or ſome manifeſt ſign of his indignation to be ſhewed upon us for our ſins.

We ſhould therefore learn this heavenly wiſdom, to break off from our ſins to day by true repentance & turning to the Lord, leſt we be marked for deſtruction too morrow; and we ſhould make our peace with God by faith in Chriſt, that we may be marked with the ſeal of redemption, which Chriſt will ſtamp upon every true believers heart for their preſervation from evill in this life, and for their eternall felicity in the life to come.

Conſider yet further, how the Sun in the Firmament did mourn to ſee the King of glory thus abaſed, to ſee the ignominy and diſgrace that was caſt upon him,

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We ſhould therefore learn this heavenly wiſdom, to break off from our ſins to day by true repentance & turning to the Lord, leſt we be marked for deſtruction too morrow; and we ſhould make our peace with God by faith in Chriſt, that we may be marked with the ſeal of redemption, which Chriſt will ſtamp upon every true believers heart for their preſervation from evill in this life, and for their eternall felicity in the life to come.

Conſider yet further, how the Sun in the Firmament did mourn to ſee the King of glory thus abaſed, to ſee the ignominy and diſgrace that was caſt upon him,

how cruelly he was used, and how unjustly he was put to death. This should teach us to mourn for the calamities of the Church of God, & for the loss of any pillar in that spirituall building. We have many examples of the servants of God for this pious duty; *Jeremiah*, *Ezrah*, *Nehemiah*, and others mourned and lamented greatly for the first desolations of *Jerusalem*, and of the Temple. [k] Christ himself wept over *Jerusalem*, when he beheld it, because he knew the finall destruction that should shortly after come upon it. When *Elisha* the Prophet was fallen sick of the sickness whereof he dyed, *Joash* the King of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face and said, *O my Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.*

[k] Luk. 19. 41,42,43. 2 King. 13. 14.

This was a full expression of the grief and sorrow of his heart for the losse of so great a Prophet, who was a strong Pillar in the house of *Israel*.

Consider also that if there be no mourning, and no teats for the sins of a nation, or people, God will make the heavens to mourn, and the clouds to pour down rivers of teats, to teach us what we should do, when the land is over-grown with the weeds of sin.

If it be so, that the servants of God do mourn for the miseries that his Church doth suffer, and for the losse or pulling down of any polished stone in that heavenly building; then whose servants are they, and what master do they serve, that dismember the mysticall body of Christ, that pull down any Pillar of his Church, or pull any polished stone out of his spirituall Temple, whereby it may be in danger of ruine, or to fall to decay? Also, they are in a sad condition, that pollute, deface, or throw down his materiall temples, to the dishonour of his Name, to the suppressing of his true worship and service, and to bring in sects and schismes, profaneness and superstition. God will not suffer such instruments of wickedness to go unpunished; but in his due Time he will make them examples of his fury, if they

they do not ſincerely repent of their crying ſins, and curſed abominations.

By this ſtrange darkneſſe of the Sun we may alſo learn how uncomfortable it is to a childe of God, to have the light of his Countenance clouded from him. [m] *David* was much troubled when God did hide his Face from him. [m] Pſal. 30.

How was Chriſt himſelf perplexed in his ſoul, when the light of Gods countenance was withdrawen from him? it made him cry out in the bitterneſſe of his Spirit, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* As it is the greateſt bleſſedneſſe to injoy the favour of God, ſo it is moſt uncomfortable when we have no apprehenſion of it. Thus ſaith *David* of himſelf, [n] *Thou haſte made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.* Alſo, thus he prayeth, [o] *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* [n] Pſal. 21.6. [o] Pſal. 4.6.

It doth likewiſe teach us what a great puniſhment it is when the Miniſters of God are removed from their places, and the people ſit in darkneſſe, and left to ignorance and ſpirituall blindneſſe, or elſe to ſuch teachers, as cannot ſhew them the right way to heavenly happineſſe. But it is a puniſhment above all other, when God will take away his Word and Goſpel from a Nation, or people; becauſe they deſpiſe it, and will not learn inſtruction by it.

Chriſt thus threatneth the Church of *Epheſus*. [p] *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the firſt works; or elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and I will remove thy candleſtick out of his place, except thou repent.* Darkneſſe of underſtanding was one of the curſes which God threatned to bring upon his people, if they would not obey his Law. [q] *The Lord ſhall ſmite thee with blindneſſe, and thou ſhalt grope at noon-dayes, as the blinde groopeth in darkneſſe, and thou ſhalt not proſper in thy wayes.* [p] Rev. 2.5. [q] Deut. 28. 28, 29.

Among the ſins of the Jews which the Prophet reckoneth

Isa. 59. 7, 9, 10. koeth up, this was one, [r] that *they made haſte to ſhed innocent blood; Therefore* (ſaith he) *is judgement far from us, neither doth juſtice overtake us: We wait for light, but behold obſcurity; for brightneſſe, but we walk in darkneſſe. We grope for the wall like the blinde; and we grope as if we had no eyes: We ſtumble at noonday, as in the night, We are in deſolate places as dead men.*

All this was truly verified in the *Jews* at this time, when they ſhed the innocent blood of our Saviour Chriſt upon the Croſſe.

It is therefore a fearfull judgement, when God doth bereave us of the means of knowledge and underſtanding of his will. Hear what the Lord threatneth by his Prophet. [s] *Behold the dayes come, ſaith the Lord God, that I will ſend a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirſt for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they ſhall wander from ſea to ſea, and from the North even to the Eaſt, they ſhall run to and fro to ſeek the Word of the Lord, and ſhall not find it.*

[s] Amos 8. 11, 12.

Miſerable are the people that are in ſuch a caſe: for they have no means to come to the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, by whom they muſt be ſaved.

Now let us Meditate with faithfull hearts on the wonderfull goodneſſe of God, who hath continued ſtill unto us the light of his Goſpel, and his Word of truth, to be a Lanthorn to our feet, and a light unto our paths, and to guide us into the way of true peace and heavenly felicity, whereas our ſins have juſtly deſerved that he ſhould remove our Candleſtick from us. Let us alſo ſtudy all thankfulneſſe to him for ſo great a bleſſing, and labour to improve it to the glory of God, and to the edification of our ſouls to eternall life. [t] In the dayes of the Judges untill *Samuels* time the Word of the Lord was precious; there was no open viſion. Wherefore, while we do injoy it we ſhould highly prize it, and imbrace it with pure affections, as the means which God hath appointed for our ſalvation.

[t] 1 Sam. 3. 1

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In the last place consider, that as it was the good pleasure of God to humble his onely Son so low before he had finished the work of our redemption, as that the Sun seemed to mourn at the sight of it: so likewise God is sometimes pleased to bring his dearest servants from the highest degree of honour to the lowest condition of men for some end and purpose, which he in his secret wisdom doth intend; either for his own glory, or for their good. It may be our case to be brought from plenty to penury, from pleasure to pain, from health to sickness, from credit and honour to shame and disgrace; but we need not repine at Gods Providence herein: for as he can advance his own glory by our condition, how mean soever it be; so he can and will sanctifie our condition to our comfort, and for our good, though it be among the lowest degrees of men, if we do meekly submit to his will and pleasure. We cannot be brought so low as our gracious Saviour was, we cannot suffer so much of Gods fury as he did: for he drank a full draught, and the very dregs of the cup of trembling at Gods hand; but we have a very small portion measured out to us, and the bitterness of it will soon be out of our taste: [u] for *the anger of God endureth but a moment, in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.* Our cup of affliction is tempered and measured out by Christ according to our strength, and it is sweetned with many comforts, that we may willingly take it, and be able to bear it. [u] Psal. 30. 5.

Christ hath had full experience of our sorrowes, and he will compassionate us in our miseries. If we are oppressed under the crosse, he will ease it in his good time; if we are perplexed for our sins, he will present our condition to his Father, and the merit of his blood to procure our atonement with God, that the bright beams of his grace and favour may again shine upon us.

If we do seriously meditate on these things, we may

faithfully believe, that Chriſt the Sun of righteouſneſs will at length come with healing in his wings, and diſpell the black cloud of afflictions, which hath long overſhadowed us.

Of the Death of our SAVIOUR CHRIST.

CONſider now with all pious devotion, to what weakneſſe both of ſpirit and body our dear and precious Saviour was brought, when he was upon the Croſſe: for his blood was waſted, his Spirits were ſpent, the moiſture of his body was dryed up, and the time of his diſſolution was now at hand.

[a] Zech. 13. 7. Now was fulfilled that of the Prophet, [a] *Awake, O ſword, againſt my ſhepherd, and againſt the man that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of hoſts: ſmite the ſhepherd and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered.* When Chriſt was in this extremity of

[b] Joh. 19. 28. weakneſſe a little before his death, [b] he ſaid, *I thirſt*, by all which he did ſhew the truth of his humanity. This thirſt was not ſo much for wine, or water to refreſh his fainting ſpirits, as it was to have our redemption finiſhed, that God might be glorified in the ſalvation of mankinde. Then the barbarous people that had no humanity in them, gave him Vinegar in a ſpunge to drink, which they did out of malice to increaſe his pain and miſery; but the Lord did ſo order it, that it was to

[c] Pſal. 69. 21. fulfill this ſaying of the Pſalmiſt, [c] *They gave me alſo gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gave me Vinegar to*

[d] Joh. 19. 30. *drink.* When Chriſt had taſted it, he ſaid, *It is finiſhed*; becauſe all the Propheſies were then fulfilled that were ſpoken of him in his life. [e] *Then he commended his Spi-*

[e] Luk. 23. 46. *rit into the hands of his Father, and gave up the Ghoſt*: As this Lamb of God lived in perfect innocency, ſo he dyed in perfect meekneſſe.

Then

Then preſently after [f] *one of the ſouldiers pierced his ſide with a ſpear to his very heart, and forthwith came there out blood and water*; that the Scripture might be fulfilled, [g] *They ſhall look on him whom they pierced.* [f] Joh. 19. 34. [g] Zech. 12. 10.

This was alſo done that we might faithfully believe the truth of his death. This is a ſpeciall Article of our Faith, which we muſt ſtedfaſtly believe, if we will have comfort in the aſſurance of our redemption: for if Chriſt had not truly dyed, the juſtice of God had not been fully ſatisfied for our ſins, we could have had no power to dye unto ſin, or to mortifie our corruptions and ſinfull luſts, and death would be moſt bitter, fearfull and terrible to us. If Chriſt had not dyed and roſe again, how could death have been deſtroyed? How could the ſting of death be taken out? Who ſhould have ſanctified death unto us? And how could we be willing to imbrace it? Wherefore if we do truly believe the death of Chriſt, and that he dyed for us, it will miniſter much matter of exceeding great conſolation to our ſouls at the hour of our diſſolution.

From the former conſiderations we may draw much comfortable matter for our hearts to meditate upon.

Firſt it doth evidently appear that our Saviour Chriſt did aſſume to his Deity our whole nature, ſoul and body, which did ſtill retain all the properties of humane nature, unconfounded with his Deity: [h] *He was like unto us in all things*, [i] *ſin onely excepted.* His ſoul was ſenſible of grief and ſorrow; his body did feel the ſmart of pain, he was ſubject to all our naturall paſſions and infirmities, which may be without ſin; he was ſenſible of hunger, thirſt, wearineſſe and the like: he was alſo ſubject to mortality, though not to corruption: for, [k] *God would not ſuffer his holy One to ſee corruption*; because he had no ſpot or ſtain of ſin in him, and there was a true diſſolution of his ſoul from his body when he dyed. [h] Heb. 2. 17. [i] Heb 4. 15. [k] Pſal. 16. 10.

If Chriſt had not aſſumed our whole nature, he could

not have perfectly ſaved and redeemed us, ſoul and body, and then the work, which God ſent him to do, had not been finiſhed, but we had ſtill remained in our ſins.

Heb. 10. 10 [e] But the whole work of our Redemption was fully wrought by that which he ſuffered, both in his ſoul and in his body, to give us an holy aſſurance that we are freed from the guilt of ſin here, and ſaved from the condemning power of ſin hereafter.

Secondly, we may learn from thence this inſtruction, ſo to regulate our thirſty deſires, that they may be for the glory of God, and not for our own ſinfull ends. If we thirſt after the things of this world for any other end, than for the honour of God; our thirſt is ſinful, and it will be ſatisfied with vinegar or gal; and if we thirſt after blood, rapine or revenge, the end of theſe and the like thirſty deſires will be the death of our ſouls. But if our thirſt be holy and heavenly, we ſhall then have thirſty deſires

Iſa. 61. 3. and holy endeavours [m] how to injoy God, and to do his will, how to preſerve our neighbours ſafety, and how to keep our ſelves undefiled; and if we can ſay as *David*

Pſal. 143. 6. did, [n] *My ſoul thirſteth after thee, O Lord, as a thirſty land*: then our thirſt ſhall be quenched, and our ſouls ſhall be refreſhed with the ſweet comforts of God. Alſo, if we thirſt after Chriſt Jeſus, who is the chief honour of a Chriſtian, and after grace and godlineſſe, which are the true riches of the ſoul; then Chriſt will be a fountain

John 4. 10. of living water to us, which onely can quench our ſpirituall thirſt, and refreſh our panting ſouls, and it ſhall ſpring up in us to everlaſting life. Chriſt calleth every

[p] John 7. 37 one to drink of this water. [p] *If any man thirſt, let him*

[q] Iſa. 55. 1. *come unto me and drink*: Thus ſaith the Prophet, [q] *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and ye that have no ſilver, come, buy and eat; come, I ſay, buy wine and milk without ſilver and without money.*

Here Chriſt offereth himſelf and his graces freely: But to whom? It is onely to ſuch as have a ſpiritual thirſt after him. Wherefore if this be the thirſt of our ſouls

to

to injoy Christ, and him crucified, we shall see such a Fountain of water of life flow out of his blessed side, as will purifie our hearts from all sin, and cleanse our consciences from all iniquity, whereby our thirsty soules will be more comforted and refreshed, than our bodies can be by any Fountain of Water in our naturall thirst. This holy thirst made *David* soul pant more after God, than the *Hart panteth after the water-brooks.* Psal. 42.

Thirdly, from this consideration that Christ had vinegar given him in a spunge, we may learn this profitable Doctrine, that there is no content nor stability in any earthly thing, for though we should injoy all the contentment that the world can give us; yet it will not satisfie our desires, something will be wanting, and we shall still thirst after more, and we shall finde soureness and bitterness in the best of earthly things. Also, that which we do possesse, we have it but in a spunge, a sudden casualty by fire, or water, a word spoken against King, or State will wring it out, a little pain or sickness a little trouble or sorrow will soon blaste the comfort of of it, and make it like vinegar to our taste. If we should meet with nothing to imbitter, or blast our earthly joyes, yet in their own nature they are transitory and unstable, and when old age cometh, we shall take no pleasure in them, and death will quite bereave us of them all. Now then if we put our trust in these vain things they will deceive, and will give us no solide comfort, except we do injoy them in Christ: for without him the best of all earthly blessings are but vanity and vexation of spirit. Wherefore let this be our greatest care, our chiefest joy, and the desire of our souls to injoy Christ, to be joyned unto him with the bond of faith and love; and then whatsoever our estate or condition be, we shall finde comfort in it, we shall injoy it with a good conscience, we shall glorifie God with it, and if we do casually lose it, we shall lose nothing by it: for we shall still injoy Christ, who will abundantly recompense our earthly losses with Eccl. 12.

ſpirituall comforts here, and with an eternall inheritance hereafter, beholde and to

Fourthly, when death comes near to us, we have moſt need of the beſt comforts, both for ſoul and body that we may the more ſtrongly encounter with this terrible enemy in the diſſolution of our ſouls from our bodies; but Chriſt at this time had ſoure vinegar given him, which could no way comfort him; but rather aggravate his pains and ſorrowes, when he was every way in great extremity.

This doth fitly reſemble the caſe of many of Gods dear ſervants: for they are often troubled and perplexed with many fears, doubtings, temptations, and evil ſuggeſtions of the devil, when they are to enter into a ſingle combate with death it ſelf: for then he will lay their ſins before them with all the aggravations that may be, and he will labour to hide the mercies of God in Chriſt from them, that they might have no hope, or comfort to ſupport them in this great conflict, which doth put them into trouble of minde, grief of heart, and anguiſh of ſpirit, and it is more uncomfortable and unpleaſing to their ſpirituall taſte, than any vinegar can be to the palate. Then is the time when the Divell is moſt maliciouſly bent againſt them, then doth he beſtirre himſelf, to trouble the Peace of their conſciences, to diſquiet the tranquillity of their mindes, and to keep them from the aſſurance of the love and favour of God to them in Chriſt, that they ſhould not comfortably reſign up their ſouls unto God: he will affright them with the fear of death, with the greatneſſe of their ſins, with the hypocriſie of their hearts, with their infidelity and unbelief, he will labour to keep the gracious promiſes of God from them, or elſe to perſwade them that they belong not unto them, that ſo they ſhould have no comfortable aſſurance of the pardon of their ſins. Alſo he will terrifie them with the fear of Gods juſtice, and with the terrour of the dreadfull day of judgement, if it were poſſible, to drive them into deſpair.

But

But here is comfort for a poor ſinner, that it is thus aſſaulted by the Divel, when he is near his departure out of this life, or at any other time; that Chriſt hath ſanctified all theſe ſorrowes and conflicts to him, and he will confirm his faith, and ſtabliſh his hope upon his true humiliation for his ſins; and then thoſe fears and doubtings will vaniſh away; for he knoweth that we are not able to reſiſt ſuch temptations, and the weakneſſe of our ſpirits, and of body is ſuch, that we cannot withſtand ſuch ſtrong aſſaults, and therefore Chriſt will give moſt ſtrength to our inward man, when the outward man is moſt weak, and he will moſt weaken the power of the Divell, when his malice is ſtrongeſt to do us hurt. And though we may be dangerouſly foyled in theſe ſpirituall combates; yet Chriſt will uphold our faith, he will give us ſpirituall conſolation, and will ſpeak peace to our ſouls and conſciences, when through weakneſſe of body we cannot expreſſe the joy and comfort of it.

Fifthly, before we can willingly leave this world, we muſt be well perſwaded that we ſhall injoy a better habitation in the world to come, which holy perſwaſion that we may have, we muſt ſeriouſly conſider how we have done the works which God hath appointed us, how we have improved the talent that he hath lent us, how we have glorified God in our calling, and what good we have done to our neighbour, according to the means, and ability that God hath given us: for we muſt give an account of all theſe things before the Tribunall Seat of God, and we ſhall be judged according to our works.

Wherefore if we can truly ſay that we have done Gods works to the beſt of our power, & with an upright heart, and that we have well improved our time, and our talent to the glory of God, then we may ſay with Chriſt, *It is finiſhed*, and with *Paul*; *I have finiſhed my courſe and have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſſe, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give* 2 Tim. 4. 8

me at that day; and not to me onely, but unto all them also that love his appearing. And though our work hath been very imperfectly done by us; yet Christ our Saviour will make it perfect by that which he hath done for us in our nature, and God will accept it for his sake: then we shall cheerfully resign up our souls to God at the hour of our dissolution.

Sixthly, Christ doth here teach us to commend our souls into the hands of God; we received them immediatly from God, and therefore we ought to resign them up again unto him, he breathed into us the breath of life, which is our chiefest and most precious Jewell, and therefore we ought to keep it holy and undefiled for him, that when he is pleased to call for it, we may be sure to deliver it up to himself: for the Divell will be ready watching for it, as soon as it is separated from the body, and none can keep it from him but onely God. Wherefore we must keep our souls so pure and clean, that God may accept them, and take them into his charge: for if we present unto him a filthy soul, polluted with the guilt of sin, we have no ground to believe that God will take care of it, and keep it unto the general resurrection.

Wherefore, we should study and labour to keep our souls clean from sin, by washing them dayly in the blood of Christ by faith: if they be stained with the sins of the day, we should thus cleanse them at night before we sleep, and if they are defiled with the pollutions of the night; we must not forget to wash them with the teares, sighes and groanes, that flow from a sorrowfull and contrite heart in the morning, before we set about our necessary occasions in our calling, that we may comfortably believe that God will blesse and prosper our handy work.

If this be our dayly and constant practise, the blessing of God will go along with us in all our actions, sin cannot then cleave to our souls to make death fearfull to us,

death

death cannot then come ſuddenly upon us, neither will the remembrance of it be terrible; but we ſhall cheerfully commend our ſouls to God; becauſe we may confidently believe that he will keep them in his heavenly manſions, untill they ſhall be again united to our bodies with an unſeparable union, and made glorious bodies fit to live and reign with Chriſt for ever.

But naturall men know not the worth of their ſouls, nor the great price wherewith they are redeemed, if they belong unto Chriſt, they ſuppoſe that the ſoul cometh from a Principle of nature, as the body doth; whereas it is an immortall ſpirit, which proceedeth not from any mortall principle, but is breathed into us by the holy Ghoſt, as ſoon as the body is framed in the wombe, and made capable to receive this breath of life. Though the ſoul be thus highly to be prized, and far excelleth the body in worth and dignity; yet naturall men will pamper and garniſh out the body, which is every day ſubject to corruption and change; but they ſuffer their ſouls to ſtarve for want of ſpirituall food, and to go naked for want of ſpirituall cloathing; whereby they are expoſed to the venomous darts of the Divell, and to the ſcorching heat of their ſinfull luſts. Their ſouls have no ſpirituall light to foreſee dangers and to ſhun them, they have no heavenly grace to reſiſt the temptations and allurements of the world, the fleſh and the Divell; but what the eye or the eare lets in, is willingly received. Thus their ſouls are polluted and unclean, and death doth ſnatch them away; becauſe they cannot willingly deliver them up: for they have no faith to believe, and no aſſurance to perſwade them, that God will receive their ſouls, when they are parted from their bodies.

This is the condition of our ſouls by nature, and ſo long as they are in this condition God will not receive them; and then they muſt needs be a prey to the Divell.

But Chriſt hath redeemed our ſouls from deſtruction, Pſal. 103.

[u] 1 Cor. 6. 20. he hath bought us with a great price, he hath ſhed his moſt precious blood upon the croſſe, to take away the guilt and filth of our ſins.

Wherefore, God may juſtly claim our whole man, both ſoul and body as his due by a treble right; by the right of creation, of donation, and of purchaſe: [x] for *in him we live and move and have our being*; [y] *What have we that we did not receive from God?* What ſhall we bequeath unto him in thankfulneſſe for all his benefits to us? We can do no leſſe than devote our ſelves, ſouls and bodies to him, and to his ſervice while we live here; and when this life ſhall be ended, to bequeath our precious ſouls unto him, purified and cleanſed from all ſin in the blood of Chriſt by faith, for nothing can be too pure that is preſented to him, and nothing can be too dear and precious for him

[x] Act. 17. 28
[y] 1 Cor. 4. 7

If we bequeath this precious legacy to God in our life-time, then he will require it, as of right belonging unto him, and he will receive it from us at our death: This will ſweeten the bitterneſſe of death to us, which will put an end to all our ſorrowes, and this will make us willing to leave this world, and deſire with *Paul* to be diſſolved; becauſe we do ſtedfaſtly believe that we ſhall be with Chriſt.

But if we give our ſelves to worldly vanities, to lewd and licencious living, and not to the true worſhip and ſervice of God; we ſhall then be unwilling to part with this life, or to look upon death when it comes, becauſe we know not to whom it will deliver our poor ſouls: for we cannot comfortably commend them to God when we dye, with any hope or good aſſurance that he will receive them; ſeing they did God no ſervice while we lived. What thankfulneſſe is it then to commend our ſouls unto God, when we can keep them no longer for the world, or for our ſinfull delights? And what comfort can we have at our death, if we have no faith to believe that we ſhall injoy all happineſſe with Chriſt,

but

but rather just cause to fear that the sinfulnesse of our life will bring us to everlasting torments after death.

It may sometimes fall out that we shall neither have time nor ability to dispose of our souls when we dye, as we desire and as we ought: for if death comes suddenly upon us by any casualty or otherwise; we have then no time to commit our souls unto Gods protection: or if we are taken away by some violent or malignant disease, which doth distemper our senses, and weaken our understanding and reason, that we are unfit for this great work, we have then no ability to resign up our spirits unto God in an holy way.

What shall we do then? Where is our comfort in death? This need not trouble our thoughts, if we have formerly in our life had any holy assurance of our union with Christ, of our justification by his righteousnesse, of our redemption by the merit of his blood, and of his death, and of his sanctification by the holy Ghost; and that we have lived vertuously and piously in the fear of God, and have served the Lord our God with a perfect and upright heart in the time of our life: for then death cannot come suddenly upon us, and no extremity of sicknesse or pain can separate us from Christ, nor take away our comfort from our souls at our death; because God will receive them up into his holy habitation, to abide and dwell with Christ for ever, though we have neither time nor ability to commend them unto him.

Lastly, let us zealously meditate for our great comfort upon the bloud and water that gushed out from our Saviours heart after he was dead, when his side was pierced with the spear. There was bloud to take away the guilt of sin for our justification, and there was water to wash away the stains of sin for our sanctification. For as our sins were imputed to him as our surety; so by faith his righteousnesse is imputed to us, and God doth account us just and righteous in his sight for the sake of Christ,

Christ: ſo likewiſe by grace we are renewed dayly and ſanctified in our lives and converſations.

Wherefore, we ſhould raiſe up our thoughts, and the affections of our hearts to this ſanctifying water, when we think upon our Baptiſme, or ſee that Sacrament celebrated, that our hearts may be ſprinkled with it by faith, to purifie our ſouls from the leproſie and ſpots of our ſins. Alſo we muſt ſet the cogitations of our hearts upon this ſacred blood, when we feed at the Lords Table, that by faith we may be perſwaded that Chriſt did ſhed his blood and was crucified for us.

Conſider alſo, that though the body of our bleſſed Redeemer was miſerably rent and torn by the cruelty of his enemies, yet God would not ſuffer them to break a bone of him, according to this of *David*, [z] *He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken*: and though they brake the bones of the two malefactors that were crucified with him; yet they brake not a bone of him, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, [a] that *not a bone of him ſhould be broken*.

[z] Pſal. 34. 20

[a] Num. 9. 12.

God ſo reſtrained his bloody enemies, that they could do no more than what was decreed, and what Chriſt was willing to ſuffer: for he did not yield to their malice and cruelty, but onely in obedience to his Fathers will: for a word of his mouth had been ſufficient to confound all his tormentours; but how then ſhould our redemption be wrought? How ſhould the will of God be fulfilled? And how ſhould he have learned by his own experience what we ſuffer when we are under the croſſe, that he might pity us?

This may teach us to bear patiently whatſoever God doth lay upon us, though the inſtruments that he uſeth be our deadly foes; becauſe it is his will and pleaſure to have it ſo. [b] Thus did *David* meekly bear the curſing of *Shimei*, and would not ſuffer *Abiſhai* to kill him, becauſe it was the Lords will it ſhould be ſo.

[b] 2 Sam. 16. 10.

This Meditation will greatly comfort our fainting ſpirits,

ſpirits, when we are under any ſtrong temptation, or worldly miſery, that no enemy, be he never ſo powerfull, or his heart never ſo malicious, can imagine more againſt us in his wicked thoughts, or act more with his cruell hands, than Divine Providence hath appointed. Alſo, no calamity, pain or ſickneſſe can afflict us without his will, no perill or danger can come near us without his permiſſion, and we ſhall ſuffer no more under any croſſe, than God in his wiſdom knoweth to to be profitable for us.

If we are thus perſwaded, it will greatly comfort us in all our ſufferings, and keep us from murmuring and repining when GODS viſitation is upon us.

Wherefore, let no fear of danger caſt down our hope, let no ſtorme of perſecution ſhake the foundation of our faith, and let no waves of affliction quench the flame of our love, or abate the zeal of our affections to our dear Saviour, who ſpared not his own life for us, but poured out his very heart bloud for our juſtification and ſalvation. If the ſtrength of grace that is in us be not anſwerable to what we ſuffer, or to the power of our corruptions, Chriſt will either take off ſome part of our burden, or give us more ſtrength to bear it; and he will alſo make us able by degrees to overcome our corruptions, that we may live a ſanctified life to the Lord; and then let death come how, or when it will, we ſhall dye in the Lord; which will be great gain and advantage to us.

Now let the Meditations of thy heart be fixed upon the death of thy precious Saviour, that from thence thou maiſt draw vertue and power by faith to mortifie and kill the body of ſin, that by nature, is in thee, & alſo to have a firm aſſurance that he hath reconciled thee to God by the merit of his blood. Why then doſt thou cheriſh any ſin to crucifie thy Redeemer afreſh? What is this that thou doeſt when thou delighteſt in ſwearing, in uncleanneſſe, in drunkenneſſe, and the like? Why doſt thou delay

thy turning unto God? Why doſt thou thus indanger the ſalvation of thy ſoul? Oh think upon the iniquity of thy ſin with hatred and deteſtation, which hath put to death thy gracious Redeemer, think upon thy ſin with godly ſorrow and true compunction of heart, which did ſo ſeparate thee from thy God, that nothing could reſtore thee into his grace and favour, but the death of his eternall Son.

Wherefore ſeek earneſtly by faithfull Prayer to thy ſweet Saviour, that thou mayeſt finde the vertue, and power of his death in the crucifying of all the ſeverall members of this body of ſin, that by nature is inherent in thee, that ſo thy corruptions may be weakened, and thou mayeſt be dayly renewed by the ſtrength of that ſanctifying grace, which the Holy Ghoſt hath wrought in thee.

Conſider now in the laſt place, how rigorouſly God did deal with his onely Son throughout his whole paſſion; he gave him no intermiſſion in his ſuffering; but as ſoon as one ſorrow was paſt, another preſently came in the place, when one pain was over, a greater was ready to ſupply the room: [c] *his heart was ſmitten and withered like graſſe, ſo that he forgat to eat his bread*: his torturings came ſo faſt upon him, that he had no time to refreſh himſelf with bread or water; but above all Gods fury was upon him in all his ſufferings, which made his paſſion beyond the ſtrength of nature. God never dealt thus with any of his ſervants; but ſtill they had ſome intermiſſion in their afflictions, ſome comfort in their ſorrowes, and ſome heavenly conſolation to uphold their ſpirits, or elſe a joyfull deliverance out of them.

[c] Pſal. 102. 4.

Joſeph had his afflictions, and yet at length God advanced him to great honour. *Jobs* afflictions came upon him as faſt as one meſſenger could follow another, at laſt miſery ſeized upon his own body: but in the end God gave him double as much as he took from him. So likewiſe

likewiſe *David* and many more have ſuffered very great afflictions and torments; but none like unto Chriſt, whoſe paſſion continued to his heath. [d] *Paul* was above measure afflicted perſecuted and tormented for the Name of Chriſt, and at laſt he dyed by the ſword: but all this while he had Chriſt to ſupport him with many ſpiritual conſolations. Wherefore, howſoever God is pleaſed to deal with us in this life, it will be in mercy and in judgement for our good, and not in fury, or in the rigour of his juſtice for our confuſion, and he will bountifully reward us in the life to come, if we hold out conſtant to the end.

[d] 2 Cor. 11.

What happened at CHRISTS *Death.*

WHen the ſoul of our bleſſed Redeemer was diſſolved, and ſeparated from his breathleſſe body, [a] *The vail of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottome, the earth did quake, the rocks rent, the graves were opened, and many bodies of the Saints which ſlept aroſe, and came out of their graves after his reſurrection.*

[a] Mat. 27. 51.

God did ſhew theſe ſtrange ſigns and wonders at the death of his Son, as fore-runners of the fearfull judgements, that ſoon after ſhould come upon that renowned City, and upon the whole nation of the *Jews*, and ſo ſtrike terrour into their hearts for their odious and deteſtable ſin, in crucifying the Lord of glory, if by any means they could be made ſenſible of their ſins, that they might repent and turn to the Lord, that ſo God might turn away his judgements, and have mercy on them.

This hath been Gods uſuall courſe, to give warning before he ſtrikes, to threaten before the judgement comes, and nothing but repentance can ſtay Gods hand. [b] *Ahabs* outward form of humiliation kept off the

[b] 1 Kin. 21. 29.

judgement from himſelf, that God hath denounced againſt his houſe by his Prophet. The *Ninivites* repented at the Preaching of *Jonah*, and therefore God brought not the evill upon them, which he threatned againſt that great City. But the houſe of *Juda* would not repent, though God ſent his Prophets to them early and late; and therefore they were carried away captives into *Babylon*. Thus doth God in great mercy give warning before he doth viſite a nation, or a people in his wrath, that they ſhould prevent the judgement, by their repentance.

Firſt, God did ſhew by the renting of the vail of the Temple, that the partition wall was now broken down, which was between the *Jew* and the *Gentile*, and that Chriſt was as freely given to the one as the other, and the merit of his blood was as effectuall for the ſalvation of the *Gentile*, as it was for the *Jew*, if he were truly received by faith. The vail being now rent, the *Gentile* hath free acceſſe to the Mercy-ſeat, which did typifie the Throne of grace by Chriſt. Long before this God did chooſe ſome to be the firſt fruits of the *Gentiles*, as namely *Eliezer* of *Damaſcus* in *Abrahams* family, *Rahab* of *Jericho*, *Ruth* the *Moabiteſſe*, and *Naaman* the *Syrian* with many more.

Secondly, God did hereby ſhew, that now there was an end put to the ſacrifices of the Ceremoniall Law; becauſe the true Paſchall Lambe was ſlain, of whom theſe ſacrifices were but types and ſhadows, and that the Ceremoniall Law was now abrogated, [c] and the true worſhip and ſervice of God was not confined to *Jeruſalem*, or to the Temple; but now God might be worſhipped in any other place, ſo that it be in ſpirit and in truth.

[c] Joh. 4. 23, 24.

Thirdly, we may ſee the free mercy and goodneſſe of God to the *Jew*, and alſo to the *Gentile*: [d] for by the death of his Son he hath eaſed the *Jew* of the great burden of Ceremonies, which neither they nor their

[d] Acts 15. 10.

fathers

fathers were able to bear, by putting an end to the Ceremoniall Law; and he hath brought the *Gentile* within the Covenant of grace, and hath admitted him into the moſt holy place: for the vail of the Temple, which before kept him out, is now rent aſunder. God hath alſo ſanctified every place where he is truly worſhipped and ſerved with a pure and upright heart, and hath given us as great Priviledges in Chriſt, as he gave to his ancient people the *Jews*.

Fourthly, by theſe miraculous ſignes and wonders God did convince his people of the hardneſſe of their hearts, and of their wilfull blindneſſe, who would not ſee the fulfilling of their ancient Propheſies in Chriſt, nor believe that he was that Meſſiah which was promiſed, though they could object nothing againſt it. Wherefore their hearts did not relent for their great impiety; but the earth and the ſtony rocks were more ſenſible than they.

If we are thus hardned in our ſins, and thus blinded in our underſtandings, it is a fearfull ſign that we are given up to a reprobate minde.

Fifthly, we may hereby ſee how God made the ſenſeleſſe creatures to honour his Son at his death, though both *Jew* and *Gentile* did moſt ſpitefully diſhonour him in his life. Chriſt honoured his Father while he was living, and his Father honoureth him now he is dead by theſe great wonders, and by the Teſtimony of the Centurion, and others, who ſeeing what came to paſſe, ſaid, *Truly this was the Son of God.* Thus will God honour thoſe that honour him by a vertuous and godly life, or by their ſufferings in his cauſe: for he will make their innocency to appear, and will manifeſt the truth of their Profeſſion to the honour of his own Name, and he will give them immortall glory in the life to come. * Mat. 27. 54.

Wherefore if thou art in place of authority, honour God by executing judgement and juſtice without exception.

ception of persons; if thou art rich, honour him in the right use of them, and with works of mercy to the poor and needy; if thou art poor be content with thy condition. If thou hast children, honour God in their good education, teach them the fear of the Lord, and let thy verteous life and good conversation be an example of piety to them. Also if thou hast a family, command thy children and servants to keep the way of the Lord, to walk in his Statutes, and to do righteously, that the Lord may bring a blessing upon thee, and upon thy house.

If thou art under the crosse, honour God with thy patience, hope, and confidence in him whatsoever thy condition be, honour him with thy thankfulnesse.

Sixthly, God doth give us to understand by the trembling of the earth, and by the renting of the rocks, how powerfully the holy Ghost doth sometimes work upon our hearts at our first conversion, to bring us to repentance, as he did at the conversion of *Paul*, and at the conversion of the Jailor, and of diverse others, for though our hearts be naturally as stupid and dull to any thing that is spirituall and heavenly as a lump of earth; yet when the holy Ghost works upon them with his Almighty power, he will make them quake and tremble, and he will put a new principle of grace into them, whereby they shall be changed into a gracious condition, and their natural dull and stupid properties shall be made active and ready for every holy duty. And though our hearts are by nature as hard as any stone, and no way capable of any gracious and heavenly impression; yet the Spirit of God will break them in pieces, and will mollifie and soften every piece, to make it tender and flexible to the will and pleasure of God.

Acts 9.
Acts 16.

Wherefore if thou dost find this dulnesse in thine understanding, this earthly mindednesse, and this stupidity in thine affections, that thou hast no will to serve thy God; also, if there be such obduracy in thy heart

that

that thou canſt not lament, and mourn for thy ſins, and thy heart cannot melt into ſighing and tears for thy tranſgreſſions, and if there be ſuch unbelief in thee, that thou canſt not apply any promiſe of mercy to thy ſelf, and canſt have no hope nor aſſurance of the pardon and forgiveneſſe of thy ſins upon thy repentance and turning unto God; then make thy condition known to thy Saviour Chriſt in all meekneſſe of ſpirit, and he will put an holy light into thy underſtanding by his Spirit, he will ſanctifie thine affections, and ſeaſon them with grace, he will take away thy hard heart of unbelief, and will make it more ſenſible of thy miſerable condition, and will fit and prepare it for a deeper impreſſion of grace.

Laſtly, God doth ſhew by the opening of the graves that there ſhall be a generall reſurrection of every mans body at the laſt day, when they muſt appear before the judgement ſeat of God, to give an account of whatſoever they have done in the fleſh. Though our bodies are lockt up in the grave for thouſands of years, and though their duſt and aſhes are ſcattered abroad with the winde to the utmoſt parts of the earth, yet at the laſt every grave ſhall be opened, and ſhall deliver up her dead, and every grain of duſt ſhall be gathered together, that every man may have his own body, to deliver up his account before the great and dreadfull Judge of heaven and earth, to receive the juſt reward of their works: the wicked to be thruſt down with the devils into everlaſting burnings for their evill deeds, and for their unbelief; but ſuch as belong unto Chriſt ſhall be received up to eternall glory: The Saints that then aroſe out of their graves were forerunners of this generall reſurrection.

This was a dreadfull ſign to the cruell *Jews* who had imbrewed their hands in the blood of Chriſt: for the ſame Jeſus, whom they crucified, ſhall be the Supream Judge at that day, before whom they muſt appear, to anſwer for this their bloody fact.

It may also be a terrible warning to all wicked men, that are defiled with innocent blood, and that live in profaneneſſe and ſenſuality, fulfilling their ſinfull luſts without any remorſe of conſcience, or holy deſire to be reclaimed from their wicked wayes, and without any care to make their peace with God by faith in Chriſt, and by true repentance: for a time will come when they muſt anſwer the rigour of Gods juſtice for all their crying ſins, and hainous abominations.

Wherefore, enter into a ſerious conſideration with thy ſelf, how thou art prepared and fitted for thy grave. If thou haſt lived to the world, to the fleſh, to the devill, or to thy ſelf, thou art in a ſad and lamentable condition: for the grave cannot keep thee from judge-
[h] Jon. 2. 10 ment, but muſt open her mouth, [h] like *Jonahs* Whale, at the ſound of the laſt Trumpet, and it will deliver thee up even as it found thee. If thy grave receive thee an hypocrite, a blaſphemer, a ſwearer, an unclean perſon, or the like; it will deliver thee up to judgement all polluted with the guilt and filth of the ſame ſins. [i] *If thy bones*
[i] Job. 20. 11 *are full of the ſins of thy youth, they will lye down with thee in the duſt*, and they will cleave faſt to thee, when thou ſhalt riſe again. How canſt thou then ſtand before the Tribunall ſeat of God, and before all his glorious Angels and bleſſed Saints, if thou art in this ſinfull condition? And how canſt thou endure the rigour of his juſtice, and the ſeverity of his judgement?

If this conſideration were well imprinted in thy heart, it would make thee afraid to go on in a way of ſin without repentance.

But ſuch as have lived to the Lord ſhall dye in the Lord, and ſhall ſleep quietly in their graves as in their
[k] Mal. 3. 17. beds, [k] for they are the Lords Jewels, and he keeps them in theſe cabinets, untill the day that he ſhall make up his Jewels.

Wherefore, if we have any intereſt in Chriſt by Faith, his blood will cleanſe us from all our ſins, his righteouſ-

neſſ

neſſe will make us accepted in the ſight of God, and he will account us as his jewels, and then Chriſt will ſanctifie the grave to us. [1] *We ſhall enter into Peace, we ſhall reſt in our beds, Walking in his righteouſneſs.* Thus comfortably ſhall we enter into the grave, if we have an holy aſſurance by the witneſſe of his Spirit to our ſpirits, that we dye in the Lord, and then our reſurrection will be with unſpeakable joy and comfort to us. [1] Iſa. 57.

Of the Buriall of Chriſt.

THough Chriſt dyed a moſt ſhamefull and ignominious death; yet he had honourable buriall according to the manner of the Jews: [a] *For Joſeph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, two honourable men among the Jews, begged leave of Pilate, and took down his body from the Croſſe, and wrapped it in linnen cloathes with ſpices, and laid it in a new ſepulchre, which was hewen out in a rock, wherein was never man yet laid, and they rolled a great ſtone to the doore of the ſepulchre.* But the chief Prieſts and Phariſees thought him not ſafe enough, and therefore to prevent his reſurrection (as they thought) [b] they got leave of *Pilate* to make the Sepulchre ſure; *Then they ſealed the ſtone and ſet a watch about the Sepulchre*; yet notwithſtanding at Gods appointed time, he did riſe again from the dead by the power of his Deity, which was not ſeparated from his humane nature, though he were now dead: [c] for, *God would not ſuffer his holy One to ſee corruption*; [d] *and his naturall body was raiſed up a ſpiritnall and glorified body.* [a] John 19. 40, 41. [b] Mat. 27. 62, 65. [c] Pſal. 16. 10. [d] 1 Cor. 15. 44.

But what comfort can we draw from Chriſt now he is dead? Can we have any benefit by him as he is now buried? It is true which Chriſt ſaid, [e] *It is the Spirit that quickneth, the fleſh profiteth nothing.* [e] John 6. 63.

Though we can draw no comfort from the body of Chriſt as it is now in the grave; yet by his eternall Spirit

which ever liveth, we may receive great benefit and much ſpiritual conſolation by the death & burial of our Saviour Chriſt. For by faith we may draw vertue and power from thence to kill that body of ſin, which by nature is in us, and to bury it with Chriſt, that the new man of holineſſe and righteouſneſſe may be quickned and raiſed up in us: for it is not enough to mortifie and kill this body of ſin; but we muſt alſo bury it, and every member of it with Chriſt, that no ſin, though it be never ſo profitable or pleaſing to our nature, may gather ſtrength to overpower us, or to bring us again into ſubjection, that every baſe luſt ſhould reign over us, to make us ſlaves unto ſin. It is true that ſin will ſtill dwell in us, but the Spirit of Chriſt will make us able by the vertue of his death ſo to kill the power of it, that it ſhall not have dominion over us. Grace worketh our ſanctification by degrees, and we cannot expect perfection of holineſſe, untill we come into the Kingdome of Heaven.

Now if we will bury our ſins in the Sepulchre of our bleſſed Saviour, we muſt not onely forbear the actuall committing of ſin; but we muſt quite looſe the delightful remembrance of it: for if we do ſtill retain with approbation a ſinfull remembrance of our former ſins, we do then keep them above ground and unburied, and they will be odious in the ſight of God, though the act of ſin be mortified in us. *If we are baptized into*
Rom. 6. 3. *Jeſus Chriſt, we are baptized into his death, and therefore*
4. *we are buried with him by Baptiſme into death, that the body*
of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve
ſin, but ſhould walk in newneſſe of life.

If we be thus buried with Chriſt, then the ſweet perfume and precious odours of his merits will take away the ſtench and noiſomneſſe of our ſins from the Lord our God. Wherefore, by faith we ſhall draw a new principle of grace from Chriſt, to be crucified with him, to live and dye in him, to be buried with him, both in

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the act and in the delight of ſin, & and to riſe again with Col. 3.
him in an holy and ſanctified life, and we ſhall be continually with him, to have our communion and fellowſhip with him; for every member of his myſticall body will be where he is in a ſpirituall manner; becauſe Chriſt will draw him to himſelf by his Spirit.

Thus is Chriſt alſo preſent with us by his grace, and holy Spirit, to aſſiſt and ſupport us, to teach and inſtruct us in what condition ſoever we be.

There is the ſame relation by faith between Chriſt and us, as is between the head and the members; and we ſhall injoy the comfort of this bleſſed relation by our heavenly Meditations of him: for then by his Spirit he is preſent with us to teach us ſome heavenly inſtructions for our edification, which we ought carefully to practice that he may be honoured thereby.

There is no time, or place but we may take occaſion to Meditate ſomething on Chriſt for the good and comfort of our ſouls; either as he is our Mediator and Redeemer, or as he is our Prophet to teach and inſtruct us, our high Prieſt to preſent our Prayers and oblations to God, or our King to rule and govern us by his Spirit. If we Meditate upon his paſſion, upon his death and buriall, he will ſhew us how low he did humble himſelf to advance us, and it will much comfort us in our afflictions and ſorrowes, and alſo it will fit and prepare us for death and for the grave, that we may as willingly lye down in the grave, where we ſhall reſt in peace, as we take our reſt and ſleep in our beds. By theſe and the like Meditations of Chriſt, we ſhall injoy his ſacred ſociety by his Spirit, and he will make us feel true conſolation thereby. But if we Meditate upon the Exhortation of Chriſt, we muſt raiſe our affections up to the higheſt heavens: for there he ſitteth at the right hand of God above all principalities and powers; and then he will ſhew us how victoriouſly he triumpheth over all his enemies, and that he hath ſubdued all the enemies of our

ſalvation, to teach us to fear and reverence his ſacred Majeſty, to perform all dutifull obedience to his Commands, and to ſubmit to his rule and government. And becauſe he is our Advocate with the Father, we may come boldly to him in all our wants, troubles and neceſſities.

Alſo, faithfull Prayer is another ſpeciall means to injoy the comfort of this happy relation and Communion, which we have with our Saviour Chriſt in all conditions of life, and upon all occaſions whatſoever, to give us comfort in all our diſtreſſes, ſtrength of grace againſt temptations, protection in all dangers, and deliverance out of all troubles.

If our Prayers proceed from a faithfull heart, they cannot return without a bleſſing: for they will open Chriſts rich treaſury, and whatſoever is there, we ſhall have ſo much of it as is good for us. This kind of prayer will yet reach higher: for it will ſo prevail with Chriſt, that he will open his heart to us, and conceal nothing from us that may conduce to an holy and ſanctified life here, and to the injoyment of eternall bleſſedneſſe hereafter.

If we dayly converſe thus with Chriſt in our Meditations and Prayers, we ſhall have our converſation with him in heaven, though we live in a vale of miſery here upon earth.

Now then examine thy ſelf what communion thou haſt had with thy dear Saviour; hath he walked with thee in the field, as he did with *Iſaack* in his Meditations? Hath he travelled with thee in the way, as he did with the two Diſciples as they went to *Emmaus*? Went he into a ſtrange land as he did with *Joſeph* into *Ægypt*? or was he in priſon with thee, as he was with him and with the Apoſtles? Haſt thou had his company in thy bed-chamber, or in thy cloſet as *David* had? Was he in the dungeon with thee as he was with *Jeremiah*? Haſt thou had his company when thou haſt been among ſpoilers,

ſers, as *Daniel* had among the Lyons, and as *Paul* had when he was in the Lyons mouth? And hath he been with thee upon thy ſick bed, as he was with *Hezekiah*? Then ſurely thou haſt received ſome bleſſing from him, then thou haſt learned holy inſtructions of him, how to bear thy croſſe without murmuring, and how to endure thy ſufferings with meekneſſe of ſpirit. Then alſo thou haſt learned how to pray zealouſly, how to live prouſly, how to fix thy truſt and confidence on him, and how to ſet thine affections upon him, by the plentifull experience which thou haſt had of his goodneſſe to thee, that ſo thou maiſt dye in his love and favour.

Examine thy ſelf alſo what ſin thou haſt killed, and buried: for if thou doſt leave thy ſins, becauſe thou haſt not ability to continue ſtill in them, thy ſins do leave thee, but thou doſt not leave them, and they are not buried with Chriſt in his Sepulchre: for thou retaineſt ſtill the remembrance of them with delight and approbation; and if thou hadſt ability and opportunity, thou wouldſt be as vicious ſtill as ever thou wert before. For unleſſe faith had ſealed thy union with Chriſt, thou canſt have no power from his death to mortifie thy corruptions, or to bury thy ſins with him; neither canſt thou live unto righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe.

Conſider in the laſt place what ſubtile policy was uſed to make the Sepulchre ſure, that the body of Chriſt might not be ſtolne away, and to prevent his reſurrection from the dead: for, *they ſealed the Stone, and ſet a watch about the Sepulchre.*

But God did hereby make the truth of his reſurrection the more evident, to the great comfort of his children, and ſervants; but to the perpetuall ſhame and confuſion of his enemies, and of ſuch as will not believe it. For Gods Decree muſt ſtand, and nothing can prevail to fruſtrate his determinate Councell: Whatſoever wicked men do vainly imagine, or contrive, God will bring to paſſe what he hath decreed for his own glory. This

is great comfort to the servants of God, that are under tyrannicall pressures, and can see no means how to be delivered out of their slavery: for God will bring about his own purposes, and will be honoured in their deliverance to the shame and rebuke of all their enemies.

Consider also, that those malicious Jews could not but be convinced in their consciences, that Christ was the Son of God, by those strange wonders which they saw at his death; and yet they still spit out their blasphemies, against him, though he were dead, and in the presence of *Pilate* they term him a deceiver.

Thus it is with wicked men when they are given up to a reprobate minde: for there is no end of their wickednesse against God, and no end of their malicious and mischievous practises against his servants, and against all that professe his Name.

A brief Summe of the Humiliation of CHRIST.

CHRIST was in the bosome of the Father from eternity, where he was cloathed with fulnesse of Majesty and Glory in the highest heavens, and had the Dominion and power over all things both in heaven and in earth: but when he was to undertake the Work of our Redemption, which was determined by all the three Persons in the holy Trinity, before the world was, he laid aside his Glory, and humbled himself for that great Work, which was decreed in the secret Counsel of God, and to be wrought at his appointed time. The first degree of Christs Humiliation was, that he gave away the manifestation of glory of his Deity, which he had with the Father in heaven, which was his due from his first incarnation;

carnation, the bright beams whereof were clouded with his humanity: for he took upon himself our flesh, and was clothed with our weak and frail nature, and was subject to such humane passions and infirmities as might be without sin. This was a great degree of Humiliation for the eternall King of glory to leave his glorious mansions in heaven, and to come down and be with us men here upon earth, and to take up his habitation in an earthly tabernacle, which was subject to hunger, thirst, and heat and cold, to pain, torment and death it self.

The second Degree of his Humiliation was, that he took upon himself the guilt of our sins, and did undertake to fulfill the whole righteousnesse of the law for us, and to satisfie the justice of God for all the sins of his Elect: not that his humane nature was polluted or stained with any sin: For the holy Ghost did so sanctifie the Virgins wombe, that he was conceived and born without Originall sin, and he lived without any actuall transgression: but our sins were imputed to him, and therefore as the Apostle saith, [a] *He was made a curse for us.* [b] Also, [b] *Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.* He gave his body and all the parts of it to the persecutors & tormentors, he gave his blood to be spilt, and his life for the redemption of man, he gave his soul to suffer anguish and sorrow, [c] and to be *an offering for sin*: also, in some sort he gave his Deity, by suffering most horrible blasphemies, that were cast upon him, [d] and *God purchased to himself a Church with his own blood.*

[a] Gal. 3. 13
[b] Tit. 2. 14
[c] Isa. 53. 10
[d] Acts 20. 28.

This was a very low abasement of Christ, when he left all his glory in heaven, and came down to live here upon earth, not in the nature of Angels, but he cloathed himself with our flesh, which was all stained and defiled with the guilt of our sins: [e] for *God laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

[e] Isa. 53. 6

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The third degreee of Chriſts Humiliation was, that he was content with a mean condition of life here upon earth; his birth and education was very mean, he was expoſed to wants and neceſſities, to perils and dangers even from his infancy; and after he began his Miniſtry he had no abiding place, [f] *he had not where to lay his head*, and he did the office of a ſervant to his own Diſciple, [g] when he waſhed their feet: for as the Apoſtle ſaith, [h] *He made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant.* Chriſt continually travelled from place to place to teach the people, to heal the ſick, to cleanſe the lepers, and to caſt out Devils; he was often wearied, often hungry, and often thirſty.

Mat. 8. 20.
[g] John 13. 5
[h] Phil. 2. 7.

Thus was his whole life full of ſorrowes and full of afflictions, and thus low did the eternall Son of God humble and abaſe himſelf, to advance us and to perfect the work of our redemption.

Laſtly, in his paſſion he was made a ſcorn to the moſt abject of all the people, and a deriſion both to *Jew* and *Gentile*; he ſuffered both in his ſoul and in his body, as much anguiſh pain and torment, as the power of the divell and the malice of wicked men was able to inflict upon him. And as if all this was not ſufficient to humble him enough, God himſelf did fiercely aſſault him: for he kept all comfort from him, when he was in his greateſt extremity, and his wrath went along with all his other ſufferings.

When Chriſt had ſuffered to the full, ſo much as the juſtice of God required in ſatisfaction for all our ſins, and that the work of our Redemption was perfectly finiſhed, then he commended his ſoul unto God, and dyed upon the Croſſe, according to this of the Apoſtle, [i] *He humbled himſelf and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſſe*: this kinde of death was moſt painfull, ſhamefull, and accurſed.

Phil. 2. 8.

Here is a ſhort view of the humiliation of Chriſt: for

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our weak understandings cannot reach to the depth of that which Christ suffered for us; much lesse can we reach to the honour and dignity of his Person in his Divine nature, which doth make his sufferings, and his Humiliation far the greater. If we do seriously meditate upon it with pious affections, it will teach us to adore his sacred Majesty with reverence and godly fear, to love him with a perfect love, to serve and obey him with a pure and upright heart, and to suffer any thing for his sake with a cheerfull minde. Also, if we have gained any grace by the death and passion of Christ, it will teach us meeknesse of spirit, and humility of minde, though we have places of preheminence and authority above other men.

If God shall bring us down from an high degree to a mean condition of life, we shall bear it contentedly, because God is the sole disposer of all things, and he can raise us to an higher degree, if he pleaseth. If what we have be too little for us, and that we can improve more to the best advantage of Gods glory, he will in his good time bestow more upon us.

If our life be full of troubles and sorrowes, the Humiliation of Christ will teach us, *to humble our selves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time.* We may safely cast our care upon him, for he careth for us. *His right hand will hold us up, and he will hold up our goings in his paths, that our footsteps slip not.* Christ also *will put his left hand under our heads, and with his right hand he will embrace us.*

Wherefore, if we have this gracious humility of spirit, it will produce these and many more blessed fruits, to give us comfort in a troublesome and painfull life. And when death comes, it will be favourable to a meek and humble spirit, and well-come to a good conscience: if we be thus qualified it will bring us to our graves in peace, and then we shall have a joyfull and a blessed resurrection.

1 Pet. 5. 6.

Psal. 18. 35.

Psal. 37. 24.

Cant. 2. 6.

Christ did willingly humble himself to the death for us; why should we be unwilling to resign up our life unto him? do we know no other happinesse, or do we hope for no greater felicity, than what we now injoy? We have no abiding place here, but we are subject to changes every moment, and upon every small occasion. *We are strangers and sojourners here, our dayes on earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding;* our mansion house where we must dwell for ever, is in heaven, which Christ our Saviour hath prepared for us; to draw our mindes from all earthly delights, which are fading and transitory, and alwayes mixed and imbittered with some sorrowes and vexations, that our hearts and affections may be inflamed to injoy that celestial happinesse, where we shall be stablished and confirmed in perfect holinesse for ever, and where we shall injoy the perfection of all blessednesse for evermore

Chro. 29.

Heb. 12. 2. Wherefore, *we look unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the crosse, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God.* Tim. 2. 12. *If we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him; if we dye with him, we shall also live with him, if we are buried with him, we shall rise with him, and if we partake with him in his humiliation, we shall also partake with him in his exaltation; for the members must be made conformable to the Head.*

Of the Resurrection of CHRIST.

WE come now to the Exaltation of our blessed Redeemer: for though he suffered his enemies to tyrannize over him at their pleasure, and to put him to a most cruell and shamefull death upon the crosse, because it was his heavenly Fathers will it should be so, yet he rose again the third day by the Almighty Power of his Deity, and clothed himself with the glorious robes of immortality, triumphing over all his enemies, both

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spirituall and temporall. The truth of his Resurrection did first appear by the testimony of two Angels to the Woman that came the third day to his Sepulchre to imbalm his body: [b] then he appeard to *Mary* and to his Disciples at several times: also to five hundred brethren at once, and he conversed with his Disciples fourty dayes upon earth, before he ascended up into heaven. [b] Joh.

Many Saints that slept were raised out of their graves with him, who also appeared to many in the holy City, and probably ascended up with him into heaven; so that we may safely build our faith upon the truth of his Resurrection, which is an Article of faith that we must believe for the well grounding of our hope, that our bodies shal also rise again from the dead with songs of rejoicing and triumph.

Here is matter of exceeding great comfort to our souls for our hearts to Meditate upon, if we do stedfastly believe that Jesus Christ our blessed Saviour is risen from the dead.

First, we may be truly perswaded hereby, that he hath fully satisfied the justice of God for all our sins, and that the guilt of sin is taken away from our souls, and nailed to his Crosse, so that if God looks upon our sins there, he will also see the precious blood of his dear Son that was spilt for them.

Secondly, we may firmly believe, that Christ by his Resurrection, hath gotten the victory and conquest over sin, death, hell and the Devill; [c] for *we he had power to lay down his life, so he had power to take it again.* Christ hath likewise taken away the strength of sin, and hath pulled out the sting of death, in that he hath fulfilled all righteousnesse, and fully satisfied the penalty of the Law: [d] for *the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law.* Wherefore we may now draw vertue and grace from Christ, to overpower all the corruptions of our hearts, [e] and though we are dead in our sins and offences, yet by the power of his Resurrection he will quicken and raise [c] John 10. [d] 1 Cor. 56. [e] Eph.

raise us up out of the grave of sin, and will give us a spiritual life to live the life of grace to him here, that we may live the life of glory with him hereafter for ever.

Why then should we fear death that hath no sting to wound us? Why should we not smile upon it, seeing Christ hath sanctified it to us? Why should we fear the Devill with a servile fear, seeing Christ hath redeemed us out of his bondage? His malice may molest and trouble us, if we be not well armed with faith; but Christ hath weakened his power below our strength. When our bodies lye in the dust, our souls will be out of the devils reach: for Christ will take them up to himself into the paradise of God, where the devil cannot come, for he is cast down into utter darknesse; he may be permitted to tempt or afflict us while we are in the flesh, but Christ, whom we serve, will not suffer him to prevail against us.

Thirdly, seeing Christ our head is risen from the dead, we also that are his members must rise again at the last day: for the head will draw all the members of the body with it.

Christ hath redeemed our bodies from the grave, as well as our soules from death: if therefore we be not raised again out of the grave, our redemption is not perfectly wrought us. Also, if there shall be no resurrection of our bodies, and if death hath power to keep them still in the grave, then our union with Christ is not firm, and our faith is not able to keep us close unto him, and our hope is not stedfast, for death hath not this power, the graves will open and deliver up their dead, and our bodies shall rise again to enjoy that unconceivable happinesse, with our soules of the beatifical vision of God, and to be for ever with Christ our Redeemer, because Christ our Head is risen.

Lastly, our chief comfort dependeth upon our resurrection to glory, for in this life we finde nothing but la-

labour and travell, sorrow and trouble, vexation, and anguish of spirit: our hope of future rest and peace, of joy and comfort, happinesse and glory, doth sweeten all our afflictions here, and makes us bear them contentedly and chearfully, for as *David* saith, [f] *Verily, there is a reward for the righteous*, and this reward is in heaven. Now if there be no resurrection from the dead, our hope is vain, our comfort will deceive us, and our life is most miserable of all men, according to this of *Paul*: [g] *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*; for we shall never injoy this reward which God hath promised; but our faith is grounded upon the sure promises of God, which cannot deceive us concerning the resurrection of our bodies unto glory, which will yield us unspeakable consolation, when we seriously Meditate upon it.

[f] Psal. 58.

[g] 1 Cor. 15.

Wherefore now, raise up thy spirit thou fainting soul, for Christ hath redeemed thy body from the grave, and thy soul from death by his Resurrection, he hath conquered all the enemies of thy salvation; sin hath no condemning power over thee, death is advantage to thee, hell is lockt up from thee, and the Devill himself cannot go beyond his commission for thy hurt. Though the world doth frown upon thee, and thou findest tribulation here; yet be of good chear, and lift up thy head: for Christ hath overcome the world, and he will sanctifie all thy tribulations to thee. Thou livest here subject to shame and reproach, to diseases of body and sorrow of spirit, and to all miseries and calamities; but death will put an end to all thy labour and travell, the grave will refine thy body from all imperfections and diseases, and thy resurrection will bring thee to thy reward, which is laid up for thee in heaven.

[h] Joh. 16. 33.

If the powers of darknesse set themselves in array against thee, if the terrours of death assault thee, fear not, but keep close to the Resurrection of thy Saviour by faith, he hath overcome them all, and will also sub-

due them unto thee. If thou art a member of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, thou must be made conformable to him, as to thy head, as well in his glory as in his shame, as well in his resurrection as in his death and buriall.

If the crosse must try thy strength, he will not tire thee with a greater burden than thou art well able to bear. If pain or sickneſſe brings thee near unto death, the faithfull hope of a joyful resurrection will greatly refresh and comfort thy soul: for though thy soul must be parted from thy body; yet neither thy soul nor thy body shall be parted fuom Christ; but thou shalt rise again out of the dust with a spirituall and immortal body to be joyned unto Christ thy head for ever.

Now think on these things with holy affections, and they will minister heavenly comfort to thy soul, when thou art in any perplexity of minde or body.

Consider now to whom Christ appeared after his Resurrection, it was first to holy Women, who in their pious devotion and love to him came to imbalm his body with spices and sweet odours: then he appeared to his Disciples at sundry times, and also to many Brethren, that they all might be well confirmed in the truth of his Resurrection, and of his Deity, to comfort them in their sorrowes, to uphold them in their sufferings, to strengthen their faith against all persecutions and bloody tryals: and to be able to strengthen others in the Doctrine of the Resurrection. Thus did the holy Apostles testifie that they had seen the Lord Jesus after he was risen, to confirm their Doctrine of his Resurrection. But Christ did not appear to any wicked or ungodly men: for they could neither believe it nor understand it, nor receive any comfort or benefit by it, because they have no spirituall eye to discern his glorified body, but chiefly because they have no relation to him as their Saviour.

Christ doth appear to us at this day by his Spirit when,

when he doth manifeſt to us the truth of his Reſurrection by his Word, and doth give us grace to apply it to our ſelves, for the confirmation of our faith in the Reſurrection of our bodies at the laſt day. But chiefly Chriſt doth appear to us when by faith we draw vertue and power from his Reſurrection, to riſe from the death of ſin to the life of grace, when we can raiſe up the affections of our hearts from earthly and worldly cares to heavenly contemplations, and when we can with the wings of faith mount up above the ſinfull delights and pleaſures of this life, and above all the calamities and tribulations that we ſhall meet with here upon earth, to have our converſation in heaven, and can draw comfort to our ſelves in all our ſorrowes and miſeries from the hope of our reſurrection.

There will alſo be a day of reſurrection to the wicked, which will be moſt ſad, wofull and miſerable to them: for they ſhall not riſe with purified and glorified bodies; but with filthy, ugly, and unclean bodies, all beſmeared with the guilt of ſin which will make them odious to look upon, and they have no covering to hide their ſins, but onely the Divels liverey, which is a guilty conſcience, that they may be known to whom they belong: For there is no place, and no inheritance in heaven for ſuch unclean monſters; but they ſhall be thruſt down into the loweſt hell, to partake with the devil and his angels in their everlaſting torments, which is the reward of all wicked men for their evill works.

Of CHRISTS *Aſcenſion up into Heaven.*

WHen Chriſt had fully inſtructed his Apoſtles after his Reſurrection, in thoſe things which concerned the Kingdom of Heaven, and had taught them how to plant his Church here upon earth, he was taken up in the ſight and view of them all, and aſcended up into hea-

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ven where he sitteth at the right hand of God in fulnesse of Majesty and glory, until he shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead; whereby Christ is now become our eternall Advocate with the Father, to make intercession for us, and he is also our eternall high Priest, to present our Prayers and oblations to God.

At his Ascension he carried up our humane nature with him into heaven, and hath advanced it above the Angels, and above all Principalities and powers: also Christ hath taken possession of that heavenly Inheritance, which we shall hereafter injoy: for he keeps it for us.

Wherefore now, let the thoughts of our hearts be raised up in our holy Meditations to contemplate the transcendent glory of Christ, now he is at the right hand of the Father, that we may firmly confide in him, and have a longing desire to be with him, to injoy that place
[a] John 14. 2. of true blessednesse, [a] which he hath prepared for us in his Fathers house. Also let all our Prayers and sacrifices proceed from an upright and a believing heart, that they may be such as Christ will present to his Father for us; and then we may confidently believe that God will graciously receive them.

Here is also great comfort for us, that though we sin dayly through humane frailty, or through the corruption of our nature,
[b] 1 John 2. 1, 2. [b] *that we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins*, who will intercede for us, and will present the merit of his blood unto him in full satisfaction for all our sins, whereof we may have an holy assurance by faith and true repentance.

If we do faithfully believe that we have such an high priest, and such an Advocate in heaven, why do we give our selves liberty in sin to displease him? Why do we cherish any darling sin in our affections? Why are our prayers, our praises, and our thanksgivings so few, and so seldome sent up to him? Why are they in so many

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dull that they cannot mount up to him? And why are our spirituall oblations so full of unbelief? Do we think that Christ will intercede for us, if we sin wittingly and willingly against God? Will he procure our pardon, if there be any accursed thing hidden in our hearts? Will Christ present our Prayers to God if they proceed out of feigned lips? And will he present our duties and services to God, if they are performed with unbelieving and deceitfull hearts? If we thus conceive of the intercession of Christ, we delude our selves and indanger our souls to utter perdition.

If we did truly believe, that Christ hath taken possession of that heavenly inheritance, which is prepared for us, our souls would be ravished with an holy desire to injoy it, we would contemn the vanities of this world in comparison of that, and our affections would not be carried after sinfull pleasures; afflictions and crosses would not cast down and deject our spirits, but we would live chearfully in the midst of all troubles, and sorrowes, because by faith in Christ we are made heirs of the kingdom of Heaven.

If that place be so perfectly pure, that no unclean thing can enter there, we should study to live piously and vertuously to the glory of God, while we live in the flesh, that we may have a sure hope to injoy it hereafter. If a Kings Son that is heir apparent but to an earthly Crown, should live like a base peasant, and delight in the company of such as are of mean and low degree, we wil be ready to say, that he is unworthy of such an Inheritance. Let us make this our own case, and consider to what honour and dignity we are born by our adoption in Christ, that we may not live in subjection to every base and sinfull lust, as unworthy of that Inheritance, which Christ hath prepared for us in the Kingdom of heaven.

Though our condition be mean in this world, and our calling such as that we must converse with ungodly people, as to the outward man, yet the conversation of

[c] Joh. 17. 15 the inward man may be ſpirituall and holy: [c] for Chriſt hath prayed his Father to keep us from the evill that is in the world, that we may imitate here upon earth the bleſſed Angels and Saints in heaven by glorifying God, and by our readineſſe to fulfill his will and pleaſure. [d] Col. 3. 1, 2 Thus ſaith the Apoſtle, [d] *If we be riſen with Chriſt, we ſhould ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God; and there ſhould our affections be ſet, and not on things on the earth.*

Thus we may have our converſation in heaven, thus we may live a ſpirituall life upon earth, and thus we may injoy the ſweet communion of the bleſſed Trinity, even in this life: for God the Father will be gracious and loving to us in Chriſt, as a Father is to his children. God the Son will be righteouſneſſe, ſanctification and Redemption to us, according to the nature of a Saviour to his elect people: and God the holy Ghoſt will abide with us for ever in all difficulties and dangers, according to the nature of a true Comforter.

A brief ſumme of the Exaltation of CHRIST.

IF we look now upon our beloved Saviour, we may contemplate his great Exaltation with much joy, and gladneſſe of heart, [a] *for he is aſcended up on high, and hath led captivity captive.* [b] *John* doth deſcribe him *ſitting upon a white horſe*, becauſe he doth judge in righteouſneſſe, *his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crownes; he was cloathed with a veſture dipt in blood, and his name is called the Word of God: and the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horſes: and out of his mouth goeth a ſharp ſword, that with it he ſhould ſmite the nations, and he ſhall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the wine-preſs of the fierceneſs and wrath of Almighty God, and he hath on his veſture and on his thigh a name*

[a] Eph. 4. 8. [b] Rev. 19. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

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written, King of kings and Lord of lords. [c] He is the [c] 1 Tim. 6. 15, 16.
bleſſed and onely Potentate, who onely hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath ſeen, or can ſee.

[d] God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, [d] Phil. 2. 9, 10.
which is above every name; that at the Name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: [e] for he is over all, God bleſſed [e] Rom. 9. 5.
for ever.

[f] God hath now made Chriſt a King, and ſet him upon his [f] Pſal. 2. 6, 8.
holy hill of Sion, he hath given him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion.
Alſo, the Apoſtle ſaith, [g] In Chriſt dwelleth all the fulneſſe of the Godhead bodily; and we are compleat in him which is the head of all principality and power. [g] Col. 2. 9, 10.

We may yet conſider further, how God hath exalted Chriſt: [h] For he hath made him the head of his Church, [i] and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church. Alſo, [k] Chriſt is become the head ſtone of the corner in this ſpirituall building, and he doth ſo firmly binde every ſtone of this building to himſelf, that they ſhall never depart from him. Thus God is pleaſed to reveal in ſome meaſure how highly he hath exalted our dear Saviour after his great ſufferings in his bitter paſſion; but as we are not able to conceive what he ſuffered; ſo our weak capacity cannot reach to that tranſcendent glory and Majeſty, which he now hath in the ſame nature, as he was our Redeemer, God and Man.

[h] Eph. 5. 23. [i] Eph. 1. 22. [k] Pſal. 118. 22.

If God hath ſo highly exalted our glorified Redeemer, then we muſt ſtudy and Meditate with an holy zeal and pious devotion, how to exalt him in our hearts, how to prize him in our affections according to his excellencies and dignities, how to have a reverent eſteem of his worth, how to honour and reverence him for his greatneſſe, and [l] how to fear and love him for his goodneſſe. Alſo, we muſt have a diligent eare to obey his [l] Hoſ. 3. 5.

rule and government, as he reigns and rules in our hearts by his Spirit, that we may withſtand and reſiſt the temptations of the devill, that the alluring vanities of the world may not inſnare us, and that no evill concupiſcence may overpower us; to make us diſhonour our God, or diſobey the will of our dear Saviour.

If Chriſt be truly advanced in our mindes and thoughts according to the glory and honour wherewith God hath crowned him, then our ſouls will feel a comfortable influence of grace from his glorious Exaltation, to give us an holy aſſurance that he hath led captive all our ſpirituall enemies, and hath ſo weakened their power, that they have no ability to hurt our ſouls: alſo, that in his due Time he will take revenge upon all the Enemies of his Church. And as he is crowned with the higheſt titles of honour; ſo likewiſe he will crown the meaneſt of his Saints with honour and dignity far above the greateſt Potentate upon earth. This doth alſo give us aſſurance that we may receive from the fulneſſe of Chriſt ſufficient grace for the mortifying of our ſins, for the ſanctifying of our lives, and for our comfort in all tribulations, he will ſupport us in all our ſpirituall weakneſſes, he will cure all the wounds that ſin hath made in our ſouls, and he will keep us from deſpair; becauſe he doth binde us with the bonde of faith ſo cloſe to himſelf, that we ſhall not totally and finally fall away from him, and he will ſo protect and defend us, that no adverſary power ſhall be able to take us out of his hands.

But if we conceive of theſe high honours and dignities of Chriſt according to our humane capacity, and not according to the reach of faith, as it is grounded upon the Word of God, we ſhall too much undervalue his highneſſe, and diſreſpect his ſacred Majeſtie: we cannot confide in his power to defend us againſt all our ſpirituall adverſaries, neither can we reſt and depend upon his goodneſſe to ſupply all our wants, to miniſter relief in all our neceſſities, to heal all our infirmities, and to

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be all in all unto us upon all occaſions: our frail nature will be full of doubtings and fears to weaken our faith and confidence in him: for according to our eſteem of him in our hearts, ſuch is our faith, ſuch is our hope and truſt in him; if we have no ſpiritual eye to diſcern theſe eſſential honours and excellencies of Chriſt, we cannot then reach them with that reverence, and fear, with that duty and obedience as we ought, and our beſt worſhip and ſervice will come far ſhort of that which his great and dreadful Name requireth.

Now then examine thine own heart and ſee what good evidence thou haſt that Chriſt is dear and precious unto thee, and that thou doſt honour him with thy heart and ſoul, what experience haſt thou had of his goodneſſe and power? How haſt thou performed thy duty and ſervice to him? What awful reverence and filial fear haſt thou had of his ſacred Majeſty, when thou haſt been in his preſence, and about his buſineſſe? If thy conſcience can tell thee, that Chriſt is the joy of thy heart, that he is thy Lord God, thy King and Governour; then he hath ſet up his Scepter of righteouſneſſe in thee, and ruleth in thy heart, and that hereafter he will bring thee to his eternall kingdom of glory.

If the holy Ghoſt hath thus wrought in thy heart, thou wilt finde a conformity of will to the will of Chriſt, thine affections will be ſquared to the glory of God, to love that which he loveth, and to hate that which he hateth; thy ſinfull deſires will be reſtrained: for the fear and dread of his great Name will be alwayes before thine eyes, and the love of him will conſtrain thee to obedience. Alſo, the hardneſſe of the heart will be taken away, and it will be made tender, and flexible, fit to receive any heavenly impreſſion of grace. Ezek. 36. 26, 27.

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Our Advantage and gain by CHRIST in this life.

EVery true believer hath a peculiar Advantage, and Gain by Christ, more than unregenerate men, in whatsoever they possesse: though these have more of earthly blessings and of common graces, than many of Gods servants; yet it is with a great deal of difference; for by Christ they are sanctified to the one, & not the other. But there is a spirituall Gain by Christ which is onely proper and peculiar to the children of God, whereof unregenerate men are not capable, until faith be wrought in them by the holy Ghost to unite them unto Christ.

First, we have this Advantage by Christ above unregenerate men, [a] that the curse which God laid upon the creatures for the sin of man is taken away, and he hath given to every true believer in Christ the free use of them all for his comfort, and to glorifie God in their right use, and by their thankfulnesse for them: for Christ hath sanctified them, and made them blessings to them. But unregenerate men have no right to what they injoy; because they have no interest in Christ, and the curse still cleaveth to whatsoever they possesse: for Christ hath not taken it away, nor sanctified their estate unto them for their good.

[a] Gen. 3. 17.

Secondly, this is our peculiar Gain by Christ, that he hath taken away the guilt of sin that by nature was upon our souls, and hath fastned it to his own crosse; whereas naturall men have the guilt of their sins still cleaving to their souls, so long as they are in that condition. This is a great advantage to us that are in Christ, if we do well consider it; for now we may appear with boldnesse in the presence of God, we need not fear the accusations of the Divell, our conscience can witnesse nothing against

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us, becauſe we have no guilt of ſin, and the Law cannot condemn us. [b] *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh but after the Spirit.* [c] *For Chriſt was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*, as ſaith the Prophet, *he was bruiſed for our iniquities; the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes we are healed. All we like ſheep have gone aſtray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Thus are our ſins imputed unto Chriſt; becauſe he hath taken them upon himſelf; and his righteouſneſſe is imputed unto us, that we might appear without ſin in the ſight of God.

[b] Rom. 8.

[c] Iſa. 53.

Thirdly, This is a ſpeciall Gain that we have by Chriſt above all other men, that he hath redeemed us from the curſe of the Law, [d] being *made a curſe for us: for it is written, Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* Chriſt in our nature, and for us, hath fulfilled the whole righteouſneſſe of the Law, by his active obedience to it, and he hath ſuffered the penalty of it by his paſſive obedience, even to the death of the Croſſe, that the juſtice of God might be ſatisfied for all our ſins: ſo that now we are not under the curſe of the Law, nor under the condemning power of ſin, but we are under grace; becauſe he hath reconciled us to God, and brought us again into his grace and favour, that the ſanctifying graces of his holy Spirit may ſeaſon our hearts and affections to walk before him in holineſſe and pureneſſe of living all our dayes.

[d] Gal. 3.

Wherefore now, our afflictions and troubles, which are part of this curſe, are ſanctified to us, and made ſalubrious and wholeſome for our good, and the evill of puniſhment, which we ſuffer, is taken away by the merit of his ſufferings, and the nature of them is changed into fatherly chaſtiſements, to correct us for our ſins, that we may walk more obediently before God; or elſe they are to try the truth of our graces for the honour of God that gave them.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, this is another great Advantage and Gain that we have by Christ, which unregenerate men cannot finde, that he hath also freed us from the dominion of sin: for though sin will dwell with us so long as we live in the flesh; yet the strength and power of sin is weakened and killed by the vertue and power of that grace which Christ hath given us by his death.

The best of Gods servants do often complain how the unregenerate part in them doth sometimes prevail against the Spirit, which makes them groan under the burden of their corruptions, as holy David and others have done. Rom. 7. 18, 19. *Paul* also found this to be true: for thus he saith, [c] *I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I finde not: for the good that I would, I do not; but the evill which I would not, that I do.* And he had no power but onely from Christ to be freed from this dominion of sin, and therefore he cryeth out, saying, [d] *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord;* for he found this Benefit and Gain by Christ, for saith he, [e] *To me to live is Christ, and to dye is gain;* or else we may read it thus. For Christ is to me both in life and in death advantage.

Rom. 7. 24, 25.

Phil. 1. 21.

This is not the gain which natural men look for, they seek after the gain of riches, the gain of honours, and the gain of worldly preferments; they look not after spiritual gain, they do not esteem of vertue and godlinesse; piety towards God is out of request with them, though it be the true gain and most to be desired.

Fifthly, that we may get this spirituall gain of Godlinesse; which is the advantage onely of a true Believer, Christ doth wash us in the Laver of his righteousnesse, and therefore he bestowes all sanctifying and saving graces upon us, to purifie us from the filth and pollutions of our sins. For Christ doth unite us unto himself by Faith, whereby we are cloathed with his righteousnesse,

nesse, and have all the benefits that come by the merite of his blood: then faith drawes in with it all other sanctifying graces, to make us compleat and perfect in Christ, to beautifie and adorn our souls, that we may lead a vertuous and pious life in the right way of true holiness. [h] Christ doth also give us an holy desire to *the sincere milk of the word, that thereby we may grow in* [i] *grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*: by whom we are brought into the favour of God; [k] by whose grace & love we are *freely justified through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*: [l] by whose free grace also we are saved through faith in Christ. Saving grace was one of the special gifts that Christ gave after his Ascension, according to this of *Paul*, [m] *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*. [n] Wherefore, if our hearts are stablished with grace, we shal not be carried about with diverse and strange doctrines; but we shall stand firm in the Faith, and in the truth of our Profession, and our hearts will be purged from dead works.

[h] 1 Pet. 2.
[i] 2 Pet. 3.
[k] Rom. 3.
[l] Eph. 2.
[m] Eph. 4.
[n] Heb. 13.

Sixthly, we have this great Advantage by Christ above all other men, [o] that by him we receive the adoption of sons, and thereby we injoy all the Priviledges that belong to sons: for *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba Father*; and we are made heirs of God through Christ. Wherefore, [p] in him we may *come boldly unto the throne of grace* by Prayer, *that we may obtain mercy, and finde grace to help in time of need*. For God will have a fatherly care of us to protect us in all dangers, to provide whatsoever is good for us, and to comfort us in all our sorrowes and distresses.

[o] Gal. 4. 5. 7.
[p] Heb. 4. 16.

[q] Thus was God a refuge and a shield of defence to *David*, and to other holy men in their troubles and afflictions.

[q] Psal. 9. 9.
Isa. 25. 4.

If his rod of correction be upon us, it will be in love, [r] *as a father chasteneth his son*, that he may receive us as his sons: and though we feel his visitation sharp; [s] *yet he will not cast us off for ever*: for [t] *we are sealed unto the*

[r] Heb. 12.
[s] Lam. 3.
[t] Eph. 4.

day

Heb.6.12. day of Redemption, * that we may through faith and patience
1 Pet. 1, 4. inherit the promises, * as heirs to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.

Lastly, Christ hath sealed the Covenant of grace to us with his own blood, whereby we are freed from the strict keeping of the legal Covenant of Works; and Christ will perfect with his own righteousnesse whatsoever is wanting in us to the fulfilling of the Law, if we endeavour the best we can with an upright heart to do the will of God; and then God in mercy will accept of our imperfect obedience for his sake.

This new Covenant, which Christ hath procured for us, will admit of the obedience of Christ for us, and also of our true repentance for our sins, which the legal Covenant would not; because it required perfect and personal obedience to every title of the Law, both in thought in word, and in deed.

Jer.31.33, 34. By vertue of this new Covenant, * God is our God, and he will forgive all our iniquities, and will remember our sins no more: upon condition that we believe in Christ, † who is the Mediator of this Covenant,
† Heb. 12. 24. and that with our faith we joyn piety and new obedience.

Christ hath also given us his Sacraments, whereby this Covenant is sealed to us, if we do worthily partake of them: but of this Covenant, and also of the Sacraments: I have written more fully in another Treatise.

Now Meditate with an holy devotion upon all these Advantages, which every true believer hath by Christ in this life above all other men, that have no interest in him by faith, and examine thy self hereby what thou hast gained by him. If thou usest the blessings of God and his good creatures soberly and temperately to his glory and not to pamper or cherish any sin to dishonour him thereby, and doest return thanks unto God for them

with

with a ſincere heart; becauſe he is the ſole giver of all things that thou injoyeſt: then Chriſt hath taken away the curſe that was upon them, and hath made them bleſſings to thee, which thou maiſt freely uſe to thy comfort; otherwiſe thou canſt finde little comfort in them. Alſo, if thou doſt truly believe that thy ſins were imputed unto Chriſt, and haſt an holy aſſurance hereof by the dayly renuing of thy repentance for thy dayly ſins; then thou maiſt be fully perſwaded, that the guilt of ſin, which was a burden to thy conſcience, and did cleave cloſe to thy ſoul, is taken away, and that Chriſt hath nailed it to his croſſe, whereby thou art freed from the curſe of the Law, and from the condemnation of ſin. This conſideration will much comfort thee, when thou art under the croſſe: for the evill of puniſhment that was in thine afflictions is taken away, it being part of the curſe, and thou art but chaſtiſed for thy good, and not puniſhed for thy hurt.

Examine thy ſelf yet further what thou haſt gained by Chriſt: for if thou canſt over-power thy corruptions by the ſtrength of grace, and canſt leave thy ſins before they leave thee, and that the remembrance of them is bitter to thy ſoul, and doeſt dayly ſtrive with a true purpoſe of heart to newneſſe of life; then thou haſt an evident ſign, that Chriſt hath taken away the dominion of ſin in thee, and hath poured clean water upon thy ſoul, to purifie & cleanſe thee from all thy filthines. Alſo, if thou doſt finde the fruits of the Spirit of ſanctification, that thou haſt an holy deſire to the means of grace, and a faithful endeavour to grow ſtronger in grace, that thy heart may be ſtabliſhed in the truth, and thy Faith firm to upholde thee in thy ſufferings and tryalls; then thou haſt gotten great gain and much Advantage by Chriſt. But if thou art perſwaded of thine Adoption by Faith in him, thou canſt not conceive how great thy gain will be: for whatſoever a childe can deſire of a loving Father, thou mayeſt expect much more from God; nothing ſhall be too deare

[z] Ezek. 36. 25.

for thee, nothing shall be hurtfull to thee, and nothing shall be concealed from thee, that may be profitable and advantageous to the salvation of thy soul.

Let us consider now, that our hearts may ruminate well upon it for our great comfort, what honour we have by being made the sons of God. * When *Saul's* servants came to perswade *David* to be the Kings son in law, he gave them this answer, *Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a Kings son in law, seeing that I am a poor man and lightly esteemed?* How great then is the honour, and how highly to be esteemed, for a poor wretched captive to be made the Son of the eternall and everliving God? to have such a Father to come to in all our necessities, such a Refuge in all our distresses, such a protectour against all our enemies, and to be heir to such an Inheritance as is incorruptible and eternal, which Christ hath reserved for us in heaven. * 1 Sam. 18. 23.

Wherefore we should be holy and undefiled in our conversations, as becometh the sons of such a Father, we should not walk stubbornly before him, but in filial fear and reverence, obeying his holy will and commands with filial love, and submitting to his rod and corrections, as a childe ought to submit to his Father: If our services are thus performed to God, he will then be a tender and a gracious Father to us.

If we have this Gain by Christ in this life, what is the gain of the whole world to it? What is all earthly honour to the honour of a true Christian? and yet most men covet and desire that gain, and that honour, and they neglect the true Gain, and the true honour of a Christian, which is chiefly to be desired. * *What is a man profited,* saith Christ, *if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* * Matth. 16. 26.

If we injoy Christ, we have a rich patrimony, we can want no comfort; whatsoever shall betide us in soul, or in body, in goods, or good name, he will repair all our losses in this life with abundance of righteousnesse, he will also

also repair all our losses in children, servants, or estate, either in this life, [e] as he did unto *Job*, or else in the life to come in a more plentifull manner. Christ will likewise furnish us with all spiritual abilities to encounter with the enemies of our salvation, to stand firmly for the truth, and for a good conscience, and to endure the tryall of our faith, love, hope and patience, and he will make perfect whatsoever is wanting, or imperfect in us: [d] for his grace is sufficient for us, and his strength is made perfect in weakness: his love and his care of us doth most shine forth, when we do most abase and humble our selves, and when we do acknowledge our unworthiness of it. [e] Job. 42. [d] 2 Cor. 12.

In the last place we should Meditate with all thankfulness upon the great benefit that we have by the Covenant of grace, which Christ hath sealed for us with his blood: for we may faithfully believe, and comfortably expect, that God will perform his condition expressed therein to us, though we cannot perfectly perform our conditions to him; also, that he will purifie and cleanse us from all our filthiness, [e] and will put his fear in our hearts that we shall not depart from him. Wherefore, let not the failings and frailties of the flesh discomfort us, nor weaken our faith and confidence in the goodness of God to us in Christ: for the flesh will rebell against the spirit, and the corruptions of the unregenerate part will sometimes breake out upon us, to dash and hinder our comfort in this gracious Covenant. Therefore Christ hath ordained the two Sacraments to seal this Covenant to our souls, for the better confirmation of our Faith: [f] For if we are baptized into Christ by Faith, we have put on Christ, we are members of his Church, and this Covenant is sealed to us; [g] and the blood of Christ hath cleansed us from all sin. If age, or sickness, or any thing else beside sanctifying grace, doth keep us from sinning against God, this is not the true purging away of sin, nor the regeneration and renewing of the [e] Jer. 32. 40. [f] Gal. 3. 26, 27. [g] 1 John. 1. 7.

holy Ghoſt, becauſe the evill concupiſence of the fleſh, and the ſinfull deſires of the minde will remain ſtrong, and will ſtill reign in us, though we cannot actually commit ſin. So likewiſe if we do ſpiritually feed upon the body and blood of Chriſt at the Lords Table, we do then ſeal this Covenant of grace to our ſouls, and we ſhall finde the comfort of all thoſe promiſes, that are contained in it.

This ſpiritual food was the fruit that the Spouſe did
Cant. 2. 3. feed upon, [h] which was ſo *ſweet to her taſte*; and we ſhall alſo finde the ſame ſweetneſſe in that bleſſed fruit. But if we come to that holy Supper with mindes full of worldly cares, or ſinfull luſts, and with hearts full of hypocriſie and unbelief, we do eat and drink damnation to our ſelves.

We need not now envy at the proſperity of ungodly men; their wealth is their ſnare to bring them into the paths of perdition, their gain is their loſſe, their pleaſure will be their pain, and their ſweetneſſe will be bitterneſs to them in the end: ſo that what gain ſoever they make of this world, if they do not alſo gain Chriſt with it, they will finde no Advantage nor true comfort by it.

It is a ſhame for rich men, and a diſhonour for ſuch as are in eminent places of authority, if they are not truly vertuous and religious. This heavenly gain is peculiar onely to the Children of God, which they have onely by Chriſt, and they ſeek it no where but of him.

Our Advantage and Gain by CHRIST *in Death.*

AS Chriſt is our ſpirituall gain in this life, ſo he is no leſſe our advantage and Gain in our death, for he hath ſo conquered death, that it ſhall neither ſting us, nor

nor hurt us, though we muſt at Gods appointed time yield and ſubmit unto it. Death of it ſelf is a terrible enemy, and deſtructive to our whole nature, and it is the greateſt part of the curſe for the breach of the Law; but Chriſt hath made it our friend, and hath taken the curſe from it, ſo that if we live an holy and pious life in Chriſt, we ſhall alſo dye a comfortable and a Chriſtian death in him. [a] *By the fall of Adam ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin, and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned:* [b] *Therefore it is appointed unto all men once to dye, and after this is the judgement.* [a] Rom. 5. [b] Heb. 9. 27.

Thus ſaith the Pſalmiſt, [c] *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death? Shall he deliver his ſoul from the hand of the grave?* Paul ſaith, [d] that *our bodies are but earthen veſſels, which are ſoon broken*, or [e] *earthly houſes, which are ſoon diſſolved.* [c] Pſal. 89. 48. [d] 2 Cor. 4. 7. [e] 2 Cor. 5. 1.

The wiſe man hath no priviledge from death more than the fool, one event happeneth to them both. [f] How dyeth the wiſe man? As the fool, ſaith the Preacher [g] *All go unto one place, both high and low, rich and poor, all are of the duſt, and all turn to duſt again*: For we muſt be conformed to Chriſt in his death, if we deſire to be conformed to him in his reſurrection. [f] Eccl. 2. 14, 16. [g] Eccl. 3. 20.

This is the way that every man muſt go, before he can come to eternall life: for all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God, [h] and *the wages of ſin is death.* [h] Rom. 3. 23. [i] Rom. 6. 23.

If it be ſo, that none can eſcape the ſtroke of death, but that it will ſeize upon all fleſh with an unreſiſtible power, we ought then to be alwayes well prepared, that death may not come ſuddenly upon us, to take us away in our ſins, before we have made our peace with God by faith in Chriſt, and before we have got a modeſt and ſober aſſurance of the pardon of our ſins by true repentance, that we may willingly part with this world, and comfortably reſign up our ſouls to God in full hope, that we ſhall injoy a better life hereafter for ever-

more.

more; and this preparation for Death is onely by Christ.

Consider now, that Christ will fit and prepare us for Death, and will also fit a Death for us, which shall make most for the glory of God, and be most advantagious to us; and he will so sanctifie it to us, that our gain thereby shall be far greater, than our loss.

If we dye in the Lord, or for the Lord, death may part our souls from our bodies; but it cannot part our souls from Christ: the soul may be parted for a time from a crazy, diseased and corruptible body, which is but an earthly Tabernacle; but we shall receive the same bodies again, in full strength, in perfect beauty, and incorruptible, free from aches, or diseases, from decay or corruption.

Death may take our souls out of a world of miseries and calamities, of sorrowes, troubles and vexations; but it will presently convey them into an haven of rest, and into an heaven of happinesse, where there is no labour nor toil, no troubles, nor sorrow; but perfect peace and fulnesse of joy for ever, and our bodies shall be raised up to injoy the same blessednesse with our souls.

[k] 2 Cor. 5. 1. Death may dissolve the *earthly house of our tabernacle, but we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternall in the heavens.*

What if we lose our lands and possessions, wherunto we are but tenants at will? [l] We have *a lively hope* by

[l] 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. Christ to injoy *an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.* Death may take us from our earthly friends; but it will bring us into the society of the glorious Angels, and blessed Saints in heaven; and to be wedded to Christ our Beloved for ever, to whom in this life we are but espoused.

Consider in the next place for our further comfort, that we have this Advantage by Christ above other men,

[m] 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56. when we are to dye, [m] that death hath nothing to hurt

us

us, so hath no power to condemn us, and therefore death cannot binde us over unto judgement.

Thus saith the Lord by his Prophet, [n] *I, even I am he, that bloteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* How can death then be any way hurtful to us? As Christ hath taken away the guilt of our sins, so he will also fasten all our good works and pious duties to our souls, which will go with us to the grave, [o] and will follow us to the day of judgement, to be had in remembrance then before God. This is a blessed Advantage that we have by Christ in death above other men that have no interest in Christ. For their evil works cleave so close to their souls, that they will follow them unto judgement, to increase their torments in their condemnation. Thus saith *Paul*, [p] *Some mens sins are open before hand, going before to judgement, and some mens follow after.* *Zophar* also saith thus of the wicked, [q] *His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lye down with him in the dust.*

[n] Isa. 43. 25.

[o] Rev. 14. 13.

[p] 1 Tim. 5. 24.

[q] Job. 20. 11.

Consider also, that Christ through his own death hath destroyed the Divell, [r] that had the power of death; so that now the Divel is most weak against the servants of God at the time of their death: whereas to the wicked he is a strong enemy, and will not be beaten from their beds-feet, until he hath gotten their souls, which are given him for a prey. [s] But God hath appointed his holy Angels to attend upon his children, when they depart out of this life, and to receive their souls from the hand of death, to carry them up into *Abraham*'s bosome.

[r] Heb. 2.

[s] Luk. 16. 22.

This is a great comfort and benefit to them, when they are to leave this world, and it is such a Gain, as no natural and unregenerate man can expect.

Wherefore, [t] we ought to use all care and diligence to make our calling and election sure, and to make sure our union with Christ by faith, that so we may live a sanctified life to the Lord, and then let Death come how

[t] 2 Pet. 1. 10.

or when it will, we shall undoubtedly dye in the Lord, for death may come in an hour, or in a moment, when we look not for it; it may break in upon us like a theefe in the night, and take away our souls at unawares; but this need not trouble us: for if our life hath been holy and upright towards God, our death cannot be but sanctified to us in Christ, who will keep our souls out of the power of the divel. For if we have no other power to preserve them from destruction, but what nature or common grace can afford us, we are not able to encounter with death, to make any advantage by it: for the strength of nature will decay in us, and common grace can give us no antidote against the sting of death: it is onely faith in Christ which is the true Antidote against the terrours of death, and against the power of the Divell: nature can give us no balm to heal the wounds, and putrid sores that sin hath made in our souls, which must be cured before we go hence, or else death will deliver them up in such a loathsome condition, as that God will not accept them.

Jer. 46.11 But if we go up to Mount *Gilead*, we shall finde balme there, which will cure us of all our spiritual diseases. For in vain we shall use many medicines, if we neglect this balm, which is the blood of Christ. Jer. 8. 22. There is balm in *Gilead*, there is a Physician, even Jesus Christ our blessed Redeemer, that can recover the health of our souls, and can rescue them out of the jawes of death, and from the power of the Divel.

Now let the Meditations of thy heart be continually how to injoy Christ in thy life, that thy soul may injoy him at thy death, and how to make the true gain of thy time here; that when death shall bereave thee of all time, Christ may be then thy gain for ever.

If thou wilt have any hope of a comfortable death, thou must labour to live an holy life unto God: for a vicious and sinfull life can give thee no assurance of a blessed death; and if Christ be not thy Redeemer in thy life, he will not be thy Saviour at thy death, to save

thy ſoul from deſtruction, and to bring it to eternall bliſſe. Alſo, if thou deſireſt to injoy heavenly felicity with the Saints of God, thou muſt ſo live in the true feare of God, that thou mayeſt dye in his favour, and then death will open the door, and give thy ſoul free paſſage to injoy it.

All the good that Chriſt hath procured for us by his death cannot be fully injoyed in this life; but is reſerved for us in heaven, which we muſt come to poſſeſſe by death; and therefore Chriſt will ſo prepare us for it with his ſanctifying grace, and will alſo prepare death for us, that it ſhall not hinder us of theſe great benefits; but be a ſpeciall means to bring us to the full poſſeſſion of them.

If we do well conſider and faithfully believe, that we ſhall have this gain by Chriſt in our death, how will it ſtrengthen us againſt the fears and terrours of death? How will it confirm us in a ſtedfaſt hope of a joyful reſurrection? How will it ſtir up our hearts and affections to live as becometh the children of God, that death may deliver up our ſouls unto him? and how willingly ſhall we part with this world, if we have an holy aſſurance to injoy a far better Inheritance in the world to come.

But Chriſt is no gain to unregenerate men in their death: for as they would not know him in their life, ſo he will not know them when they dye, but will leave them to the power of death, to binde them over unto judgement. Death will bereave them of all their wealth and poſſeſſions, it will ſtrip them of all their rich jewels, and precious ornaments, it will lay their honours in the duſt, it will take away all their beauty, ſtrength and comelineſſe, which was their pride; and it will leave them nothing but their winding-ſheet, neither will it give them any recompence for all their loſſes, but ſhame and confuſion, pain and torment, which never ſhall have end. This it was with the rich man in the Goſpel, for death [1] Luk. 16.

took him away from all that he had, and left him not so much as a little water to cool his tongue, when he was in the tormenting flames; and thus it is with all rich men, if they are not rich in faith and in grace.

But some are not willing to dye through humane frailty and weakneſſe, though they be in the ſtate of grace:
y Mat. 26. 41. y for the ſpirit may be ready, though the fleſh be weak. Others have no aſſurance of a better life, and therefore they would willingly keep this which they now injoy. Some again have their hearts and affections ſo glewed to earthly things, that the very thoughts of death is bitter to them. Others alſo are loath to dye becauſe they cannot provide for wife and children, and they have none to take care of them. Though God requires this Chriſtian care of them; yet we muſt not diſtruſt the goodneſſe of God, whoſe eye of providence is upon all his creatures; then much more upon thoſe that belong unto him.

But when we have done our beſt endeavor in an honeſt calling to provide for them, & yet muſt leave them ſcant of means for their ſubſiſtance; then God will have a ſpecial care of ſuch Widows & fatherles children, & therefore he hath given many ſtrict commands concerning them, and he hath made many promiſes of protection, help and
z Pſal. 68. 5 comfort to them. z *A father of the fatherleſſe, and a judge of the widowes is God in his holy habitation.* Alſo, God will bleſſe the children if their fathers have lived in the true fear of God, and he will provide for them if death takes away their parents, and they are left deſtitute of food and rayment: But this may be an advantage even to ſuch children; becauſe then they are immediatly commended to the care and providence of God, who beſt knoweth how to make proviſion for them, and he will neither be wanting in the truſt that is committed to him, neither wil he fruſtrate the hope of thoſe that reſt and depend upon him for ſuccour in time of need.

Conſider in the laſt place what the Son of *Sirach* ſaith,

a *That*

a *That as the remembrance of death is bitter to a man that* a Eccl. 41. 1, 2.
liveth at rest in his possessions, unto the man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath prosperity in all things; yea, unto him that is yet able to receive meat: so the sentence of death is acceptable unto the needy, and unto him whose strength faileth, that is now in the last age, and is vexed with all things, and to him that despaireth, and hath lost patience.

But none can be truly willing to dye, but onely a true Christian, that is ingrafted into Christ, and hath an holy assurance that he dyeth in the love and favour of God, and doth faithfully hope for that Crown of righteousnes, and that heavenly Inheritance which the righteous Judge hath reserved for him.

If we have this assurance by our union with Christ, and also a stedfast hope of salvation, well grounded upon the promises of God, we shall not be afraid to look death in the face, nor unwilling to resign up our souls unto God, before death doth violently or suddenly take them from us. For Christ hath taken away the evill that is in death, and hath so weakened the power of it, that it cannot bereave our souls of that spiritual comfort and gain which we have by him, though sometimes we cannot feel it in a sudden or violent death, neither can it binde us over unto judgement: For nothing can dissolve the union that is between Christ and our souls by faith. Though God should take us away when we are young, or in our middle age, as he did that good King *Josiah*; yet it shall be for our great Advantage, that we should not see the evill that is to come, and the sooner to injoy our eternall rest and happinesse with Christ.

Our Advantage and gain by CHRIST after death.

BUt the chiefeſt gain that a true Believer hath by Chriſt is after death: for whatſoever he gained by him in life, or in death, was to fit him for the injoyment of this great gain, and to give him ſome aſſurance of it: and ſome taſte how great and how comfortable it is. We have this heavenly advantage by Chriſt in this life, but in hope, and we cannot come to the full fruition of it until after death, and then we ſhall find it to be ſo great, that no tongue can expreſſe it, and no heart can conceive it; but if we duly conſider from what evils and miſeries we ſhall be then freed, and what glory and bleſſedneſs we ſhall then injoy, we may conceive ſomething of this unſpeakable gain.

Rev. 12.9. Firſt, we ſhall be freed from all the temptations and ſuggeſtions of the devil: [a] for *he is caſt out into the earth, and all his wicked Angels are caſt out with him*: They never had any place in heaven ſince their fall; though they flie in the air, or mount up to the firſt or ſecond region of heaven, yet they cannot come into the heaven of happineſſe, where the Saints and Angels of God have their habitation; for heaven is not a place for ſuch unclean ſpirits.

Alſo in heaven we ſhall be freed from all worldly temptations, from all carnal delights and earthly vanities, that may intice us to ſin: [b] *For there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that defileth, nor whatſoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie*: for as the place is moſt pure, ſo they that come there muſt be pure and holy.

Rev. 21.27

Secondly, in heaven we ſhall be freed from the iſſues of temptation, and that is ſin: for thus ſaith the Prophet, [c] *When the Nations ſhall be gathered unto the Throne*

Jer. 3.17.

of

of the Lord, they shall walk no more after the imaginations of their evill heart. In this life the soul is purged and purified from the guilt of sin by the bloud of Christ, and all the spots and staines of sin are taken away by the laver of regeneration; the body also is purified and refined in the grave, by the vertue of Christs death and burial; and therefore, [a] though it be sown in corruption, in dishonour, and in weakneſſe, yet it is raised in incorruption, in glory, and in power; *it is sowen a naturall body, but it is raised a spirituall body*, which is subject to no sin, corruption, or infirmity, which are the fruits of sin, and it is endowed with perfect abilities to glorifie God, together with the Saints and Angels in heaven. So long as we live in the fleſh we cannot but sin against God; but when this mortal shall put on immortality, there will be then no more place for sin, but our whole nature shall be made spirituall and heavenly. This consideration should make us desire with *Paul*, [c] *To be dissolved, and to be with Christ*, that we might no more sin against our God, nor offend him with our pollutions; but alwayes to sing praises and Hallelujahs unto him, as the Saints and Angels do in heaven.

[a] 1 Cor. 15. 42.

[c] Phil. 1. 23.

Thirdly, we shall then be freed from all troubles and sorrowes, from all pain and diseases of body, from all anguish of spirit and grief of heart: [f] *For God will wipe away all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.* Thus are the servants of God freed from all temptations unto sin, from all sin, and from all misery and sorrow after death, by the merit of Christs death and passion; but carnal and unregenerate men carry their sins with them to the grave, and death opens the gate to their eternal torments in hell: for it bindeth them over to the great and terrible day of judgement, when the fiercenesse of Gods wrath shall be poured out upon them to their utter confusion.

[f] Rev. 21. 4.

VII.

We come now to consider what great honour, and what joy and comfort the servants of God shall have by Christ after death; for though their life here be full of sorrowes, yet after death they shall be freed from them all, and they shall also have the fulnesse of all true comfort and consolation.

[g] 2 Cor. 1. 3. [h] Isa. 51. 11. First, we shall injoy God himself, [g] who is the God of all comfort: for thus he saith by his Prophet, [h] *The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto* Zion, *and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladnesse and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away; I even I am he that comforteth you.* What comfort can we then want if God be our Comforter?

[i] Psal. 36. 8. [k] Psal. 16. 11. Secondly, if we delight in pleasures, heaven will afford us more than our hearts can desire: [i] There we *shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatnesse of Gods house: and he will make us drink of the river of his pleasures, for with him is the fountain of life, in his light shall we see light.* Also, the Psalmist saith thus, [k] *God will shew us the path of life, in his presence is fulnesse of joy, at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore*: For heaven is the place of all peace and comfort, of all joy and happinesse, and of all glory and immortality.

[l] Lu. 16. 26. Thirdly, heaven is the place of all security, as *Abraham* said to *Dives*, [l] *Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would passe from hence to you cannot, neither can they passe to us that would come from thence.* Also thus saith Christ, [m] *When the Bridegroom cometh, and they that are ready are gone in with him to the marriage, the door will be shut, and then none can go in, and none can come out.* [n] In heaven we may safely keep our spiritual treasure from the moth and rust, and from that arch theif the devil. If this precious jewel, which is our soul, be laid up in heaven, it will be safely kept there, for nothing can corrupt it, and no theif can steal it away.

[m] Mat. 25. 10. [n] Mat. 6. 20.

Lastly,

Lastly, that which makes up the fulnesse of our joy and happinesse in the Kingdom of heaven, is the eternity of it: for if we should injoy it but for a time, it would greatly lessen the comfort of our felicity; there shall be an end of time, but there will be no end of our blessed condition in heaven. For thus saith the Lord, [o] *Behold I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into minde.* [o] Isa. 65. 17.

But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And again he saith by the same Prophet, [p] *For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make, shall remain before me, so shall your seed, and your Name remain.* Thus saith *John*, [q] *The servants of the Lambe shall be in the city of God, and they shall reign for ever and ever.* *Paul* speaking of the resurrection, saith thus. [r] *Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.* [p] Isa. 66. [q] Rev. 22. [r] 1 Thes. 4.

Daniel also saith thus, [s] *And the Saints of the most high God shall take the Kingdome, and possesse it for ever, even for ever and ever.* Holy *David* saith, [t] *that the inheritance of the upright shall be for ever.* Thus it is evident how great our gain shall be by Christ after death, and that there shall be no end of our happinesse. [s] Dan. 7. 18. [t] Psal. 37.

Consider now, that whatsoever we suffer in this life is but for a short time, and that the bitternesse of our sorrowes is sweetned with some comforts; also that our joy and felicity in heaven is for eternity, and that it is no way imbitteted with any troubles or vexations; that we may patiently and meekly bear whatsoever God shall lay upon us, and earnestly desire to be uncloathed of this corruptible body, that we may put on the glorious robes of immortality for ever.

Thus saith *Paul*, [u] *Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.* [u] 2 Cor. 4.

So likewise, if we consider and believe, that we have this Gain and advantage onely by Christ, it will make us study and labour by all meanes to injoy him, and when we have gotten some interest in him, to stick close to him by Faith, to love him with intire affections, and to be obedient to his will and commands.

Wherefore now, if thou hast any holy desire to be freed from all temptations, from all sin, and from all sorrow, vexation and calamity; then set the Meditations of thy heart upon the fruition of the Kingdom of Heaven, where thou shalt be freed from all these evils, though here upon earth they will rush in upon thee. Also, if thou desirest to injoy all the happinesse that heaven can afford thee, and to injoy God himself for ever; then look up unto Christ thy Saviour with the eye of faith, who hath purchased heaven for thee with his own blood, and hath made thee the Son of God by adoption, that he might bestow all this upon thee; whereof he hath given thee some taste in this life, but thou canst not be made perfect in it, untill this life is ended. = *Give all* 2 Pet. 1. 10. *diligence* therefore, as *Peter* saith, *to make thy calling and election sure* by a lively faith in Christ, and get the seal of the new Covenant, which is the blood of Christ, to be stamped upon thy heart, that thou mayest carry it to thy grave, and then death will give thy soul free passage into the mansions of heaven, where this perfect freedome is to be obtained, and where this gain of eternall blessednesse is to be gotten. *Wherefore walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, live not as a citizen of this world, but live here as a free denizen of the heavenly *Jerusalem*, having thy minde, and the affections of thy heart set upon the holinesse and righteousnesse thereof, that thy life and conversation may be pure and holy here upon earth, and then thy soul shall live, and eternally possesse it, after it is dissolved from thy body.

How

How CHRIST is our Spirituall life.

MAn in his first creation had a spirituall life, which was free from any spot or stain of sin; but he soon lost it by his transgression, and defaced this lively image of God, that was stamped upon his soul, and then in himself he had no ability to recover his lost happinesse. This leprosie of sin hath infected all his posterity that proceed from him by naturall propagation, which hath brought upon them a spiritual death, and layeth them open to eternall death hereafter.

Though this be our condition by nature; yet [a] *God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickned us together in with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindnesse toward us through Christ Jesus.* [a] Eph. 2. 4, 5, 6, 7.

[b] This renovation in the spirit of our minde is wrought in us by the holy Ghost through Christ: for he was anointed with the holy Ghost for this end and purpose, that by him we might be raised up from the death of sin to a spirituall life of grace, according to the signification of his Name: for as he is Christ, he is Anointed of God, and as he is Jesus, he is the Saviour of the world, to save us from our sins, and to work salvation for us, whereof we are not capable, untill we have a spiritual life wrought in us. [b] Eph. 4. 23.

Thus saith the Spouse of Christ, [c] *Thy Name is as oyntment poured forth.* A precious Oyntment hath many excellent vertues: [d] for it maketh a chearful countenance, it comforteth and strengtheneth all the parts of the body, it healeth all diseases, and it sendeth forth a sweet savour, when it is poured out, which refresheth and comforteth [c] Cant. 1. 3. [d] Psal. 104. 15.

forteth all the senses. Thus is Christ to every true believers soul, he is the Anointed of God, as saith the
Psal.45.7. psalmist of him, [c] *Thou lovest righteousnesse, and hatest wickednesse, therefore God thy God hath anointed thee with*
Act.10.38 *the oyl of gladnesse above thy fellowes:* [f] *for he was anointed with the holy Ghost, and with power.*

First, by the power of his holy unction, Christ doth put a spiritual light into our understanding by his Spirit, that we may see how to walk in the paths of godlinesse
Lu. 2. 31, and truth, according to this of old *Simeon*, [g] that God
32. had prepared him to be a light to lighten the *Gentiles*,
Psal.97.11 and to be the glory of his people *Israel*. [h] *Light is sown for the righteous*, and the comfort and gladnesse of it *for the upright in heart.*

Isa. 2. 9. This Prophesie was fulfilled in Christ. [i] *The people that walked in darknesse have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them*
Eph.5. 14 *hath the light shined.* [k] *Wherefore, awake thou that sleepest in sin, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

If we want this heavenly light we must needs wander and go astray from God, and we have no means to obtain such a light, but by Christ. It is sin that hath brought this darknesse and this spiritual death upon our souls, and none but Christ can take it away. This is the beginning of our spiritual life, when we have some light to discern the spirituall things of God, for the good of our souls.

Secondly, Christ is the food and nourishment of our souls, to preserve this spirituall life in us, whose flesh we must spiritually eat, and whose blood we must spiritually drink, by faith in the hearing of his Word preached, and Sacramentally, when we come to his holy Table; or else we have not this spirituall life in us. [l] *I am that*
John 6.48, *bread of life*, saith Christ, *which came down from heaven, who so eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternall life, and I will raise him up at the last day; for my flesh is meat*
indeed,

indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Wherefore, if our ſouls do hunger and thirſt after this heavenly food, and do earneſtly deſire to be refreſhed and fully ſatisfied therewith, it is an evident ſign that there is a ſpiritual life in us: for Chriſt doth freely offer himſelf to every empty ſoul that can feed upon him by Faith in his Word, or in his Sacraments.

But if our deſires and the affections of our hearts are taken up with the love of this world, and of earthly vanities; its no marvell if we have no hunger, nor thirſt after Chriſt, and that we feel ſo little want, and need of him.

Thirdly, the blood of Chriſt is the true balm to heal, and cure all the diſeaſes and wounds that ſin hath made in our ſouls: it is like [m] the good *Samaritans* wine and oyl, for it hath a cleanſing and an healing vertue. There can be no wound ſo deep in the ſoul, and no uſcer ſo feſtered, but this precious Oyntment will cleanſe and heal it, if it be rightly applyed by faith and true repentance: for repentance layeth open the wound by true confeſſion, and faith applyeth the remedy to it, and then repentance giveth us an holy aſſurance that we ſhall be cured. [m] Lu 10.34

This is the way, and the means of recovery, when our ſouls are ſick of any ſpirituall diſeaſe, and alſo to preſerve that ſpirituall life which is in us.

Laſtly, when the heavenly graces that flow from Chriſt are poured out upon our ſoules, they will greatly refreſh and comfort our ſpirits in all ſadneſſe of heart, and they will ſo perfume all our actions and ſervices which we perform unto God; that their ſweet ſavour ſhall aſcend up unto him, that he may ſmell it, and graciouſly accept of us, and of our offerings. [n] When *Noah* offered burnt offerings to the Lord after the flood, the Lord ſmelled a ſweet ſavour, and accepted his ſacrifice, and bleſſed him exceedingly. Wherefore, if our ſouls are perfumed with grace, they will ſo perfume all our holy oblations [n] Gen. 8. 20, 21.

which we offer up to God, that he will in mercie accept
[o] Prov. 5. 8. them for his Sonnes sake. [o] But *the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord*, and they stink in his
[p] Ro. 21. 27 nostrils, because they proceed from a corrupt and unclean
[q] Eccl. 10. 1 heart; which is not perfumed with grace; how much more when he bringeth them with a wicked mind. [p] Sin is like dead flies in the ointment of the Apothecary, which causeth it to stink: for sin maketh us odious in the sight of God.

Wherefore take heed with what heart thou comest into the presence of God, and that thou bringest no oblation to him with a wicked mind; but first purifie thy heart from sinne by faith in the bloud of Christ, and see that thy soul be perfumed with sanctifying grace, and then come and offer thy gift, and God will accept it. But if there be any sin in thy bosome unrepented of, or any iniquity in thy heart, which thou seekest to hide from God, then he cannot smell a sweet savour of thy prayers, of thy praises and thanksgivings, or of any duty which thou performest to him, to make it accepted, because thy heart is not upright before God.

Now we must examine our selves what spiritual life we have by Christ, and we must know how he is our spiritual life, if we will have any comfort thereby.

[q] 1 Joh. 2. 20 First. [q] If we have this holy unction from Christ, which was poured upon him above measure, that it might run down to every member of his mystical body, which
[r] Psal. 133. 2. was typified by [r] that precious ointment which was poured upon *Aarons* head, and ran down to the skirts of his garments; so that we have a spiritual light, to discern the things that belong to our peace: then Christ hath wrought this life in us by his holy Spirit; for in the state of nature we were dead to any thing that is
[s] 1 Cor. 2. 14 heavenly; [s] and we could not receive the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned.

Secondly, if our soules can feed upon heavenly food, and

and if we can expresse all other actions of a spiritual life, as to walk in the paths of holinesse, to speak the pure Language of *Canaan*, and to have our conversation in heaven, while we live here upon earth; we may then be fully perswaded; that there is a spirituall life in us: for so long as sin teigneth in our mortall bodies, and untill there be a new creation wrought in us, we are spiritually dead to every good work, and we can expresse no actions of a sanctified life.

Thirdly, if our soules are cleansed from the guilt of sin in the blood of Christ, and if the filth and stains of our sins are washed away in the Laver of Regeneration by his sanctifying grace, and covered under his righteousnesse, that they appear not to the dishonour of God, or to the hurt of our neighbour, and that we delight not in any sin; but do study and endeavour to serve and please God with a sincere heart and pure affections; it is a sure evidence that Christ hath quickned, and raised us up from the death of sin to the life of grace.

Lastly, if our duties and services to God proceed from a clean, and a purified heart, which is sanctified and perfumed with the graces and merits of Christ, then God will smell the perfume of them to accept of our persons and of our holy offerings, because the Spirit of Christ is in us.

Thus we may know to our great comfort, if we narrowly look into our condition, what spirituall life we have, and that we have it onely from Christ, and by him.

Wherefore, now if thou desirest to live spiritually by Christ, thou must faithfully believe that he hath taken away that spiritual death, which by nature was upon thee for thy sins, and that he onely can give thee this spirituall life: for as he hath vanquished and overcome the power of death, both spiritual and temporal; so he can give a spiritual life, as well as a temporal, to whom and when he pleaseth.

This spiritual life thou must have from him, if thou canst

canſt make a particular application of him to thy ſelf by faith, that he is thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer: for he hath then breathed into thee the Spirit of grace, which hath wrought this ſpiritual life in thee, though at the firſt thou canſt feel no power of it: without this application of Chriſt to thy ſelf, thou canſt draw no comfort from him, and he will profit thee nothing. It did much comfort *Job* in his greateſt miſery, when he did thus apply Chriſt to himſelf. [t] *I know*, ſaith he, *that my Redeemer liveth, whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf.* If thou canſt bring thy heart to cloſe thus with Chriſt, he will give light to thine eyes, food to thy ſoul, balm for thy diſeaſes, and comfortable refreſhing for thy languiſhing ſpirits. But if thou art ſtill dead in thy ſins, and haſt no ſpiritual life in Chriſt, thou canſt then feel no comfort by him: for what good can light do to a dead man? What benefit can he have by the daintieſt food? What can the beſt medicine profite him? And what ſenſe hath he of the beſt perfume? But if thou doeſt live in Chriſt, and he in thee, thou ſhalt partake with him in his fulneſſe of all ſpiritual graces: [u] *for it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſſe dwell.* [w] *And of his fulneſſe have all we received, and grace for grace.*

Now conſider further, that Chriſt is the meritorious cauſe of this ſpiritual life: [x] for he gave himſelf freely and voluntarily to be an oblation and a ſacrifice for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and from whatſoever we are lyable unto by reaſon of ſin, to wit, from the guilt of ſin, from the dominion of ſin, from the curſe of the Law, from the bondage of Satan, from the terrours of death, and from eternall condemnation. Alſo, by the power of his reſurrection he hath ſubdued and overcome death, hell, and the grave, that we might be raiſed out of the grave of ſin to live a ſpiritual life to God in Chriſt: Chriſt hath wrought our redemption by his active and paſſive obedience to the will of God, whereby we are juſtified in his ſight: for he hath taken our life out of the

Job 19. 25, 27.

•Col. 1. 19 •John 1. 16

•Tit. 2. 14

hand

hand of Gods justice, where we had no hope to injoy it, and hath put it into the hand of his mercy, where we are sure through Christ to have the comfort of it here, and the happinesse of it hereafter.

Though we must passe by the gates of hell before we can injoy the sweet consolation of this spiritual life, and though we must bring our selves so low in our humiliation, and in mortifying of our sins and corruptions, as if we were ready to be thrust down into hell; yet God will then give us a spiritual life in Christ to support us, he will then raise us up to newnesse of life by the sanctifying grace of his Spirit, that our spiritual life may appear, and that we may be made fit to injoy Christ for ever in the Kingdom of heaven.

This is the first main end of the passion of Christ, that we may be redeemed by the merit of his blood.

Secondly, Christ is the efficient cause of our spiritual life: for as we have our justification by the merit of his blood, so we have our sanctification by the same blood, and these two cannot be separated, but must go together; for we have no sure evidence that we are justified in the sight of God, but by the sanctification of our lives. The Act of our justification is wrought at once, as soon as we are ingrafted into Christ by Faith; but our sanctification must be a continued Act, so long as we live in the flesh: for the best of Gods servants have so many spots, and stains of sin in them, that they have dayly need to pray to be every day purified and cleansed with the blood of Christ, and to be dayly renewed with the graces of his Spirit.

This is the second main end why Christ gave himself to be an oblation for us, that he might purifie us to be a peculiar people to himself, according to this of *Paul*, *Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* Tit. 2. 14

This purification Christ worketh in us ministerially by

Eph. 5.25, 26. the Preaching of his Word: for thus saith *Paul*, *Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctifie and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the Word.* Also, he doth wash and cleanse us Sacramentally

Gal. 3.27. from our sins by Baptisme: *a For if we have been baptized into Christ, we have put on Christ, and then we are clothed with his righteousness, and with his holiness, which are the garments of a spirituall life; for we must be holy as well as just;*

Heb 12.14. *b without which no man shall see the Lord.* So likewise,

Acts 15.9 *c faith doth instrumentally purifie our hearts as it hath relation to Christ.*

But Christ doth most effectually purifie our hearts from sin and from uncleanneſſe by the holy Ghoſt, and by him doth convey this ſpiritual life of grace into us, without whoſe gracious concurrence no other means can be effectuall to us unto ſalvation.

Thus doth Chriſt bring us to a ſpirituall life, that our converſation may be holy and blameleſſe in the ſight of

Iſa. 35.8,9 God. *d* The Prophet ſpeaketh of *a way of holineſſe, which is not for the lyon, or for any ravenous beaſt, but for the Redeemed of the Lord, they onely ſhall walk there.* This is the

Heb 9.14. priviledge onely of thoſe, *e whoſe conſciences are purged in the blood of Chriſt from dead works, to ſerve the living God.* If Chriſt doth not thus waſh and purifie us, we have no

John 13. 8,9. part in him, *f* as he ſaid unto *Peter*, when he refuſed to let him waſh his feet. When we are thus cleanſed from our ſins, and have this ſpiritual life by grace in Chriſt wrought in us, then we are a peculiar people to him, ſeparate from ſinners, and from the vanities of this world; and wholely devoted to ſerve him; then we ſhall with *Peter* deſire more waſhing and cleanſing; *Lord, not my feet onely, but my head and my hands*; and then we ſhall have an holy zeal to do ſuch works as God hath commanded, and we ſhall do them by faith in Chriſt, and to the honour and glory of God, that the truth of our ſanctification may appear.

Thirdly, Chriſt is the exemplary cauſe of our ſpiritual life-

life; for he hath recorded his own life in the Gospel, 1 Pet. 2.
to be a perfect pattern of holinesse to us, and an example thereby to learn how to follow his steps. If we desire to live according to the rule of Christs life, we must be holy, and righteous in all our wayes, humble and lowly toward all men, meek and patient in our sufferings, sober and temperate in all things, charitable to the poor, doing good to all, frequent and fervent in Prayer, and alwayes seeking the glory of God.

This was Christs whole life, and thus ought we to regulate our lives, that the fruits of a spirituall life may shine forth in the integrity of our conversation. Christ did shew the purity of his Ministery by the holinesse of his life, and what he did Preach to others, he did practise himself. [h] *Learn of me, saith he, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* [h] Mat. 11. 29.

Though we cannot attain to perfection of holinesse in this life; [i] yet we must *presse towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* [i] Phil. 3. 14.

But this is the work of grace and not of nature to follow Christ in his steps, and the servants of God have their graces according to their measure: for some have more, some have lesse; yet all have grace sufficient to fit them for the kingdom of heaven, and according to their measure of grace, so is the purity of their lives and conversations. *Abraham* excelled all others in Faith, and therefore [k] he is called the Father of all them that believe. *Moses* excelled all men in meeknesse: for the holy Ghost giveth this Testimony of him, [l] *that he was very meek above all the men that were upon the face of the earth.* *Job* was renowned for his patience. Thus saith *James* of him: [m] *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord.* Holy *David*, *Daniel*, and others excelled in prayer and devout Meditations. These and all other the servants of God had their severall graces from Christ, and the streams of his fulnesse do still plentifully flow down to all that belong to the election of

[k] Rom. 4. 11.
[l] Num. 12. 3.
[m] Jam. 5. 11.

grace, for the ſanctification of their lives.

Laſtly, Chriſt is the finall cauſe of our ſpiritual life, which is, that God may be glorified thereby: to this end we were born, to this end ſhould tend all our words and actions, and Chriſt took upon him our nature, that God might be glorified by our ſalvation. Chriſt did alwayes ſeek the glory of God, both in his Miniſtery and in his miracles, both in his life, and at his death. Thus he ſaith of his Miniſtery, [n] *I have not ſpoken of my ſelf; but the Father which ſent me, he gave me a commandement what I ſhould ſay, and what I ſhould ſpeak: whatſoever therefore I ſpeak, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak.*

[n] Joh. 12. 49, 50.

Thus alſo Chriſt glorified God by his Miracles; [o] for he aſcribeth the cure of the impotent man at the pool of *Bethesda* to his heavenly Father, that he might have the glory of it, becauſe he ſent him to finiſh all thoſe works which he did.

[o] Joh. 5. 19, 20.

God is very jealous of his glory, [p] he will not have *his great Name to be polluted; and he will not give his glory to another. His hand hath laid the foundation of the earth, and his right hand hath ſpanned the heavens: when he calleth unto them they ſtand up together.*

[p] Iſa. 48. 11, 12.

To what end did God make the great Fabrick of the Heavens and the earth, but for his own glory? Why doth God execute his juſtice upon the wicked, but to get himſelf honour by their deſtruction? [q] as he did upon *Pharaoh* and his hoſt, when he drowned them in the red ſea. Why doth God beſtow his mercies and his bleſſings upon his ſervants, but to be honoured for and by them? And why doth Chriſt put into us a ſpiritual life, but to honour and glorifie God thereby? [r] If the man that Chriſt cured of the palſie glorified God for his cure, then much more ought we ſo to do, becauſe Chriſt hath cured us of all our ſpiritual diſeaſes. [s] If the man that received his ſight followed Jeſus, glorifying God, then ought we to follow Chriſt, and to glorifie God for

[q] Exod. 14. 17.

[r] Lu. 5. 25.

[s] Lu. 18.

that

that ſpirituall light, which he hath put into our underſtanding, and for that ſpiritual life which he hath put into our ſouls. If the creeple, whom *Peter* and *John* cured, leaped and praiſed God; then we have much more cauſe to praiſe and glorifie God with joyfull hearts; becauſe Chriſt hath cured us of our ſpirituall lameneſſe, and of all other ſpiritual infirmities. Alſo, [a] if the Centurion, when he ſaw the earth-quake, and what was done at Chriſts death, glorified God, ſaying, *Truly this was the Son of God*: then ought we to glorifie God for our regeneration, and for our Spirituall life, and to ſay, Truly this was the work of the Son of God. Act. 3.

[a] Mat. 27. 54.

We may dayly ſee the wonderfull works of God, which he doth for his own glory, to give us dayly occaſions to honour and glorifie him; and therefore this ſhould be our continual practiſe, to magnifie the Name of God, according to this of *Paul*, [a] *Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* It is the continual work of the Saints and Angels in heaven to ſing *Hoſanna to the higheſt*, and it ſhould be our conſtant care here upon earth to glorifie God, and to magnifie him for all his benefits, mercies and goodneſſe to us.

[a] 1 Cor. 10. 31.

Thus we may come to have an holy aſſurance, that we have a ſpiritual life in Chriſt, if we do truly believe that he hath redeemed us by the merit of his blood from all our iniquities, and from all the iſſues of ſin; alſo, that he hath ſanctified us, and made us an holy people to himſelf, not to ſerve the world, the fleſh, or the devel; but to ſerve the living God with a clean heart, and pure affections. So likewiſe, if we finde a new principle of grace planted in our hearts, whereby we are able in ſome meaſure to walk in the paths of godlineſſe, and ſo to ſteer all our actions, that they may tend to the honour and glory of God, the Peace of our conſciences, and the eternal comfort of our ſouls.

How to injoy true Happineſſe.

ALL men deſire to be happy; but few ſeek it where it is to be found: ſome ſeek it in morall vertues, and natural endowments, ſome in worldly pleaſures, and profits; others think to finde it in riches and honours; but all come far ſhort of the glory of true happineſſe, though they do obtain their deſire in all earthly things: for all that this world doth afford, cannot make a man truly happy, ſo much as in this life, much leſſe can it procure his happineſſe in the life to come: for there will ſtill be ſomething wanting, or elſe ſomething to imbitter their contentment in theſe things here below. If we have honour or authority to day, we may be in ignominy and diſgrace to morrow; if we have riches and plenty to day, we may be expoſed to want and penury to morrow; ſickneſſe or pain will blaſt all our earthly contentments, but when death comes, it will bereave us of them all. It is in vain therefore to ſeek our happineſſe in theſe vain things, or to put our confidence in them: for our felicity doth not conſiſt in uncertain riches, or in tranſitory honours and pleaſures, which in themſelves are nothing elſe but vanity and vexation of ſpirit.

But true happineſſe is from above, and it conſiſteth in the ſweet fruition of God: this happineſſe we had in the ſtate of innocency; but we loſt it by the fall of our firſt Parents, and we have no means to recover it, but onely by Chriſt Jeſus our bleſſed Redeemer. Wherefore, [a] God took pity on our miſerable condition, and of his infinite mercy and love *hath not ſpared his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*, to work our redemption by his death and paſſion, and to bring us again into the favour of God. And as *John* ſaith, [b] *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould*

[a] Rom. 8. 32.

[b] Joh. 3. 16.

not

not perish, but have everlasting life; ſo that we cannot have this true bleſſednesſe, but onely by Chriſt, which is every where ſet forth in this Treatiſe. Thus doth the boundleſſe mercy and unlimited goodneſſe of God appear, in offering his dear Son to all that will come and imbrace him: but ſome cannot come, becauſe they live not where the Goſpel of Chriſt is preached, which doth reveal him, and muſt inſtruct them in the right way how to finde him; ſome will not come, but make excuſes, like thoſe in the Goſpel, that were bidden to the great Supper: for they are hindered by their worldly occaſions; others are wholly taken up with carnall delights and pleaſures, which keeps them from coming to Chriſt, though they may injoy this true happineſſe by him. Lu. 14. 19.

Conſider now, that riches honours, and lawful pleaſures are not in themſelves ſimply evill: for they are Gods good creatures and his bleſſings; neither do they keep us from coming unto Chriſt; but we may injoy Chriſt together with them, if we do not immoderately covet them, and uſe no unjuſt means to get them, or put our truſt and confidence in them to derogate from the honour of God. If we injoy Chriſt with them, he will ſanctifie them to us for our comfort, and will make them the firſt fruits of our happineſſe, whereby we may glorifie God, and do much good to our neighbour: otherwiſe they are but the ſhadow of happineſſe, and not the true ſubſtance of it, which in the end will be bitterneſſe, when we muſt give a ſtrict account unto God how we have uſed them. Many a poor man that injoyeth Chriſt is more happy in his poverty, than they that abound in wealth and honour, if they are without Chriſt; for they injoy a contented minde, peace of conſcience, and joy in the holy Ghoſt, and they have an holy aſſurance that their joy and happineſſe ſhall be made perfect in the life to come. Wherefore he that hath Chriſt, hath the Fountain of all true happineſs, and ſome ſtreams thereof will flow to him even in this life.

But

But this is true which Chriſt ſaith, [a] *No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath ſent me, draw him*: and we can have no part in Chriſt, nor happineſſe by him, except we do truly believe in him. This is the way that God himſelf hath taught us, *Whoſoever believeth in him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Alſo, this is the ſame way which Chriſt taught his Diſciples, [c] *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* Our faith muſt be as firm, as ſtrong, and as well grounded upon Chriſt, as he is our Redeemer, God and Man, as it is upon God alone, or elſe we cannot injoy him, and all that happineſſe which floweth from him. Though we dare not approach neer unto God in regard of his divine juſtice; yet through the mediation of Chriſt our gracious Redeemer, we may have free acceſſe unto our God, and we ſhall find him ſitting upon his Throne of mercy ready to receive us.

[a] Joh. 6. 44

[c] Joh. 14. 1

If our faith doth reach no further than to the knowledge of Chriſt, what he is in his divine nature, and what he is by incarnation; or to his glorious excellencies and dignities, as he is the Mediatour of the new Covenant; or to the work of mans redemption, as he is the Redeemer of the world; it is but the bare notion of faith, which is not effectual enough to bring us to eternal happineſſe. Unregenerate men may know and believe thus much of Chriſt by the letter of the Goſpel, and yet never be brought into the ſtate of grace by Chriſt, becauſe they have not the grace of faith in their hearts, to apply theſe things to themſelves. The devils did know who Chriſt was, they knew the purity of his nature, and what power he had over them, and yet they continued devils ſtill. Wherefore we muſt not reſt in the bare notion of faith, but if we will believe unto ſalvation, we muſt then, [f] As *Paul* and *Silas* ſaid to the Jaylor, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, we muſt reſt upon him, and put our whole confidence in him for our ſalvation: alſo, we muſt apply him, and all his excellent dignities to our ſelves, that we

[f] Joh. 13. 8, 9.

may

may be well perſwaded of our redemption by him, and that we are inveſted into the Covenant of grace by our union with him, and that we ſhall hereafter injoy the perfection of true happineſſe.

If our Faith can reach thus high, and lay ſuch hold upon Chriſt by their particular application of him, then let our condition be what it will, we ſhall be happy while we live, more happy when we dye, and moſt happy after death: for no afflictions or ſorrowes of life, and no violence, or extremity of ſickneſſe in death ſhall be able to take this happineſſe from us, and after death we ſhall be out of the reach of all our enemies: for Chriſt, by whom we have this happineſſe, will not ſuffer us to looſe it; but by the grace and power of faith we ſhall ſtill draw all ſpiritual comfort from Chriſt to our ſouls, to make us truly happy in this life, and everlaſtingly happy in the life to come.

This is the grace and power of true faith, to apply particularly to our ſelves whole Chriſt, God and Man, and as he is our Prophet, our high Prieſt, our King, our Mediator and Redeemer, and then how mean ſoever our condition be, he will make us happy in it, and will crown us with everlaſting happineſſe hereafter: for where this Faith is wrought, there the holy Ghoſt will abide for ever, and that ſoul muſt needs be happy, that intertaineth him. [g] *For after that we have believed in Chriſt, we are ſealed with that holy Spirit of Promiſe unto the day of Redemption; this Spirit of promiſe is the earneſt of our inheritance, which Chriſt hath purchaſed for us.* [g] Eph. 1. 13.

Conſider further, that by this means we are neerly joyned unto Chriſt: [h] *For Chriſt dwelleth in our hearts by Faith.* This ſpirituall union with Chriſt is more firm and cloſe, than the union of the members of the natural body is with the head, or the union of the branches is with the vine: for nothing can ſeparate us from Chriſt, but he will keep us by his Almighty power unto ſalvation. [h] Eph. 3.

If we be in this blessed condition, nothing can hurt the well-being of our souls, but all things shall work together for our good. What comfort and what happinesse can we want, if we injoy Christ? His grace will carry us on cheerfully through all the discomforts that we shall meet with in this life, his blessings will be upon all that we injoy, and he will give us the fulnesse of happinesse in the life to come.

Though we be in Christ, yet we shall meet with many sorrowes, troubles and vexations in this life, which will cloud the sense of this our felicity: for we have here but the beginnings of that blessed and happy condition, which in the life to come shall be perfected and confirmed to us for ever in Christ.

Wherefore, we ought seriously to meditate and study how to injoy Christ, who is the true happinesse of our souls; and though we have but a taste of this heavenly consolation; yet it will sweeten the bitternesse of all misery, and as we dayly grow in grace, so we shall dayly finde more comfort by our assurance of the fruition of our future felicity in heaven. Also, the more we grow in grace, the more we shall grow out of love with this world, because we shall the better see the vanities of it, and the more we shall grow in love with vertue and true piety, which will bring us to this happinesse, and to injoy it to all eternity.

Concerning our Iustification.

THe true knowledge of this high Principle of Religion, what it is to be justified in the sight of God, and how it is wrought in us by the holy Ghost, is of great concernment to every true Christian, and it doth minister exceeding much comfort to him in the assurance of the pardon of his sins, and in the hope of his salvation.

Now

Now we are iustified, not for any inherent righteouſneſſe that is in us, nor for any foreſeen works we are able to do, nor for any grace that is wrought in us; but as God doth elect us of his own free grace and love; ſo he doth alſo freely iuſtifie us.

Firſt, by not imputing our ſins and iniquities to us. 19.

Secondly, by not inflicting the condemnation of ſin upon us.

Thirdly, by imputing the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt to us by faith.

Fourthly, by pronouncing and declaring us to be iuſt in the Court of heaven, and by witneſſing the ſame to our conſciences by his holy Spirit; and laſtly by his gracious acceptation of us.

This is our Iuſtification, and thus we may be perſwaded of it: for God hath ſet up his ſeat of Judgement in every mans conſcience; ſo that, when we remember our ſins, if our conſcience doth abſolve us by our faith in the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, and in the merit of his blood: it is a ſure evidence of our iuſtification in the ſight of God: but if it doth condemn us, then it will binde us over to anſwer for our ſelves at the laſt and general iudgement, when it will bring bitter accuſations againſt us, and witneſſe terrible things againſt our poor ſouls: for conſcience is the higheſt witneſſe next under God.

The ground of our iuſtification is Gods free grace to us by Faith in Chriſt, who hath taken upon himſelf the guilt of our ſins, whereby they are imputed to him, and his righteouſneſſe is imputed to us; ſo that now God doth account us iuſt and righteous, becauſe we have no guilt of ſin, and are cloathed with the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, and therefore he will abſolve us from all our ſins, and from the puniſhment that is due to us for them, and he will pronounce us perfect and iuſt againſt all the accuſations of the devil, and clamours of our own conſciences; he will alſo accept of our perſons, not for any grace that is wrought in us, nor for the merit of any

work that is done by us; but onely for the ſake of Chriſt, whom we do imbrace by faith, upon whom we reſt and depend, and under whoſe righteouſneſſe all our ſins are hidden and covered out of Gods ſight. Holy *David* [b] ſaith, *that the man is bleſſed whoſe wickednesse is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered. Bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.*

[b] Pſal. 32. 1, 2

Though we are iuſtified onely by Faith, without the works of the Law; yet it is not by any property, vertue or power that Faith hath in it ſelf to iuſtifie; but as it hath relation unto Chriſt, it being the ſole inſtrument to unite and knit us unto him with an unſeparable union, to be made one with him, and to be made partakers of his righteouſneſſe, and of all the benefits of his death. If we believe that Chriſt was crucified, and died for us, [c] and that his righteouſneſſe is made ours by imputation, we have then right and intereſt in all his excellencies, and in all the merits of his blood, and God in mercy will accept of our works and ſervices, though they are performed by us in much weakneſſe. We may be well perſwaded of our iuſtification; [d] becauſe God hath given us a lively hope through Chriſt, that diſtruſting our own righteouſneſſe, which is of works, we may caſt our ſelves upon the righteouſneſſe which is of God through faith in Chriſt for our iuſtification.

[c] Rom. 4. 5, 6, 7.

[d] Phil 3. 9.

Though works are neceſſary to ſalvation, and to manifeſt the truth of our faith, if they are done for the glory of God, and in obedience to his command; yet they conduce nothing to our iuſtification, neither can they merit the pardon of the leaſt ſin: [e] for when we have done all that we can, we have done but our duty, and yet not ſo much as God requireth; and therefore we are ſtill unprofitable ſervants: alſo, our beſt works as they are wrought by us, though we be in the ſtate of grace, are defiled and imperfect in the ſight of God, by reaſon of the corruption of ſin that cleaveth to them. Notwithſtanding God doth require them of us: [f] for we were

[e] Luk. 17. 10

[f] Eph. 2. 10

created

created in Christ Jesus unto good works. We can expresse no actions of a spiritual life, and no fruits of our sanctification and regeneration in Christ, but by our good works, [g] and our faith is but a dead faith if it be alone without works. [g] Jam. 2.

What life is in our faith, if it be barren and fruitlesse? How shall we manifest our thankfulnesse to God for all his benefits, but by doing that which he commandeth with a thankfull heart? Can dead works glorifie God? Can they declare our regeneration in Christ, or the sanctification of the Spirit? And how shall we strengthen our hope of salvation, if we are not fruitfull in good works? Hereby we do edifie the brethren, according to this of our Saviour Christ, [h] *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your father which is in heaven.* [i] *Hereby also, we do honour and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.* So likewise, we shall stop the mouths of the adversaries, [k] *that they may by our good works which they shall behold, glorifie God in the day of visitation.* [l] *But we are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves*, much lesse to do any thing that is good, *but our sufficiency is of God.* For as *Paul* saith, [m] *It is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* [h] Mat. 5. 16. [i] Tit. 2. 10. [k] 1 Pet. 2. 12. [l] 2 Cor. 3. 5. [m] Phil. 2. 13.

Wherefore we can ascribe nothing to our selves for any good that we do; but all the glory and praise of our works must be given to God, that he may be honoured and magnified by them. But how our works may be good and acceptable to God, is set down in the next Chapter.

Now let us study and meditate with pure affections, how to rest upon the righteousnesse of Christ for our justification, and not upon our works; for if we trust to our works, or glory in them, they will deceive us. Thus saith *Paul*, [n] *By the works of the Law can no flesh be justified.* Also, if we make our works copartners with the righteousnesse of Christ in our justification, then Christ [n] Gal. 2. 16.

will profit us nothing: for our works do conduce much to our ſanctification; but they have no place in our juſtification.

If we are not perſwaded that we are juſtified in the ſight of God, we can feel no comfort in Chriſt, no aſſurance of the pardon of our ſins, & no ſtedfaſt hope of ſalvation. If the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt be not imputed to us, our hearts cannot be ſeaſoned with grace, there can be no purity nor holineſſe of life, and we can do nothing that will pleaſe God. So likewiſe if the guilt of our ſins be not imputed unto Chriſt, that he may take it from us, it will ſtill reſt upon our ſoules, it will afflict and terrifie our conſciences, it will follow us unto judgement, and at laſt be a meanes to ſink us down into eternal deſtruction.

But here is ſingular comfort for a poor diſtreſſed ſoul, that is under the buffetings of Satan, againſt all his feares and doubtings; that if he hath intereſt in Chriſt by faith, he may ſay with *Paul*, ° *It is God that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea, rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us? who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?* Thus every true believer may comfort himſelf in the aſſurance of his juſtification, though his faith be ſtrongly aſſaulted to make him caſt off all hope of ſalvation: for nothing ſhall be able to ſeparate him from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.

° Rom. 8. 33, 34.

The benefits and comforts of true Faith.

THis faith is ſuch an excellent grace, that we may draw from it many ſingular benefits and comforts, if we make uſe of it upon all occaſions, and it doth alſo make us capable by Chriſt of eternal life hereafter. For in the firſt place, it is the ſole inſtrument which the holy Ghoſt uſeth to unite us unto Chriſt, that we may partake with

him

him in his righteousnesse and holinesse, and in all heavenly and spiritual endowments of grace, whereby we are made new creatures in Christ. When God seeth us in this gracious condition with Christ, then he is pleased to lay no guilt of sin to our charge for our condemnation, but to impute the iniquity of our sinnes unto Christ our Saviour, and of his free grace to account us just by the imputation of his righteousnesse to us through faith. So likewise hereby we have the adoption of sonnes, and all the priviledges that do belong unto sonnes. These are such benefits and such comforts, as none can conceive, but such as doe injoy them, and none can injoy them but by Christ, and there is no way to have them by Christ, but onely by a true and a lively faith in him.

Secondly, by faith we are invested into the Covenant of grace, and all the gracious promises that are contained in it doe belong unto us; also by faith we have great comfort and hope in all other the promises of God, whether they concern this life, or the life to come: for we believe the truth of his word, and his ready will to perform what he hath promised; and though his promises are sometimes impossible to nature, and above humane reason; yet faith gives us ability to rest upon them, because we believe that he is faithfull that hath promised, and able to perform his word. Thus faith *Solomon, Blessed be the Lord that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he hath promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promises which he promised by the hand of Moses his Servant.* The promises of God are limited to the condition of faith and obedience, and though they are above our capacity, yet we may confide in them, for he will perform them in his due time. *God made a promise to Abraham, that his seed should be as numerous as the starres in the firmament, when he was about an hundred yeares old; And yet being not weak in faith, he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but against hope he believed in hope, that he might become the father of many Nations, and*

1 Kings 8. 50.

Rom. 4. 18. 19, 20.

he was fully perswaded, that what God had promised he was
Heb. 11. 11 *able also to perform.* c *Sarah through faith received strength to conceive seed, though she was barren and past age, and she was delivered of a child, because she judged him faithful who had promised.* If we do thus rest upon the promises God in all conditions of life, and in all the chances and changes that can happen to us, it will fit and prepare us to receive them contentedly at Gods hands.

But the special servants of God may be so over-pressed with the extremity of afflictions, that they are ready to distrust the truth of Gods Word, and to waver in their affiance and confidence in him, if he delayeth to perform his promise, and to help them. This was *Asaphs* case,
d Psal. 74. 8 who thus complained, d *Is his mercy clean gone for ever?*
10. *doth his promise fail for evermore?* But he doth presently check himself, and acknowledge that it was his infirmity thus to distrust the goodnesse of God: Thus saith *Peter*,
e 2 Pet. 3. 9. e *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise*: for he will remember to perform it, when his time is come, that it will make most for his glory, and for our good. Where-
f Heb. 6. 12. fore f we must wait patiently upon God, and then we
g Eph. 1. 13. shall inherit the promises: g for by faith we are sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, that we may confidently rest upon God, and upon the truth of his Word.

Wherefore if we are well acquainted with the Scriptures, we shall find many promises of grace to strengthen our faith when we are under any temptation, to comfort our soules when we are in any anguish of spirit, or under the pressure of any crosse or calamity. And when we have found a promise that will suit with our present condition, then to make use of our faith to lay hold upon it, to apply it to our selves, and to rest firmly upon it, though it be above hope: for God can and will assuredly perform it to our great consolation.

If God doth deferre the performance of it longer than we expect, yet we must patiently wait upon him: for when he hath wrought his own work in us for his own

glory

glory and our good, he will not then delay to perform it a moment longer.

Thirdly, by faith we ſhall receive much profit and comfort by Gods holy Ordinances, without which our ſervices to God cannot be performed according to his will. The preparation of the heart to the profitable hearing of the ſacred Word of God, is by faith; [h] because hereby our hearts are purified and cleanſed from all ſin in the bloud of Chriſt, that no guilt of ſin may cleave to our ſoules and conſciences, to ſtop the current of grace to our hearts, and to hinder the free working of the Spirit of God upon our affections by the miniſtry of his word, that it cannot take root in us for our edification and inſtruction, to convince us of our errours, to reprove us for our ſinnes, and to comfort us in all ſorrows and ſadneſſe of heart. It is faith that makes our hearts good ground, fit to receive the ſeed of Gods Word, that it may take deep root in us, to fructifie and bring forth much fruit to the glory of God. What comfort can we have by the Word of God, if we doe not hear it with hearts purified from our corruptions by faith? how can it profit us, if there be not an holy preparation to receive it, that the holy Ghoſt may imprint it in our hearts, to be a word of power in us unto ſalvation, and to be the Savour of life unto eternal life? and how can it be fruitful in us to the reformation of our lives, if our hearts are not ſeaſoned with faith? [i] *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*, and then it is a ſpecial meanes which the ſpirit of God uſeth to convey ſpiritual knowledge to the underſtanding, holy deſires to the will, to ſtudy and endeavour to a godly life, and alſo true conſolation to the ſoul.

[h] Act. 15. 9.

[i] Rom. 10. 17.

So likewiſe our hearts are prepared by faith to the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper; for as we doe refreſh our bodies with the Bread and Wine; ſo our ſoules are refreſhed and comforted by our ſpiritual feeding on the body and blood of Chriſt by faith. Alſo faith

will put an holy zeal into our prayers, to make them fervent and effectual to prevail with God, to send us a gracious answer in his good time. Thus saith our Saviour Christ, [k] *What things soever yee desire when yee pray, believe that ye receive them, and yee shall have them.* O what comfort might we find in our prayers, when we are in want, sorrow, or in any necessity, if we did pray with zealous affections, and did faithfully believe that our petitions are granted before we receive them; then we would wait upon God, until he is pleased to satisfie our desires: for our faith will give us as certain assurance to obtain what we pray for, as if we did already injoy it. We have no hope of succour in our distresses but by prayer, and no prayer is prevailing with God, but that which comes from a believing heart. The gift of prayer may move the affections for the present, but it is the grace of prayer that is powerful with God: the gift of prayer is but a common gift of the holy Ghost, which may be without faith, and consequently without any acceptance: [l] *For without faith it is impossible to please God*; but faith doth always goe along with the grace of prayer, and God will not deny such a prayer, though it be made in weak expressions; for the heart may sigh out a faithful prayer, and grone out our desires, which the tongue cannot utter nor expresse.

Mar. 11. 24.

Heb. 11. 6.

Now then look well to the purity of thine affections, and to the faithfulnesse of thy heart, when thou art in the presence of God to hear his word, that thy mind be not then about thy worldly affaires, or thy thoughts set upon vain things, if thou desirest to receive good thereby: For if thou doest hear it with an unbelieving heart, or full of worldly cares, then thy heart is like barren ground, where bryars and thornes grow, which cannot receive such spiritual seed to bring forth fruit unto salvation.

Also, in thy holy meditations on spiritual things, thy heart must be first purified by faith, or else thy meditations

ons will not be comfortable to thy ſoul, becauſe thou haſt not faith, which is the inſtrument to draw true conſolation from Chriſt.

So likewiſe, when thou comeſt to the Lords Table, ſee there be faith in thine eyes to diſcern the Lords body in thoſe outward elements, that thou mayeſt ſpiritually feed on him, to nouriſh thy ſoul to eternal life.

When thou makeſt thy ſupplications to God, believe faithfully that thou ſhalt receive what thou beggeſt, and then thy prayers will not return empty without a bleſſing. In like manner, if thy humiliation for thy ſinnes be not a fruit of faith, but onely in outward ſhew, and not in the ſincerity of thy heart, with true contrition and godly ſorrow for them, thy humiliation is no better [m] than that of *Ahab*, which produced no reformation of life.

[m] 1 Kin. 21. 27.

Alſo, if thou doeſt confeſſe thy ſinnes when any ſore affliction is upon thee, and doeſt not faithfully purpoſe to forſake them and turn to the Lord, thou doeſt diſſemble with God in thy heart, and canſt not believe that God will forgive them; for thy confeſſion is no better [n] then that of *Pharaoh*, and thou canſt have no comfort in ſuch repentance, becauſe it is not a fruit of faith: for it is onely faith that doth perfect all thy ſervices to God in their righteouſneſſe of Chriſt.

[n] Exod. 9. 27, 28.

Fourthly, we have no defence againſt the temptations and wicked ſuggeſtions of the devill, and againſt the rage of our ſpiritual enemies, but the ſhield of faith; his fiery darts will wound our ſoules even to the death, [o] if we doe not quench them in the bloud of Chriſt by faith; his temptations will pierce us to the heart, if we doe not beat them back with this impenitrable ſhield.

[o] Eph. 6. 16.

Alſo, he layeth his ſnares every where ſo cunningly in our way, that we can hardly take a ſtep but we ſhall ſtep into a ſnare, [p] if we doe not walk in our integriy by faith, that our feet may ſtand in an even place. There is no place ſecure, and no condition of life is free from the ſnares of the devill: he layeth them in our calling, upon

[p] Pſal. 26. 11, 12.

out table, in our chambers and closets, and under our feet; so that every step we take out of the way of godlinesse is an occasion to bring us into his snares, and we have no meanes to escape them, but to walk in the light of the Spirit of God, which we cannot have but by faith in Christ.

If we walk thus by the direction of his Spirit, then, [q] Prov. 28. 18, 26. as the wise man saith, [q] we walk uprightly, and we shall be saved: we walk wisely, and we shall be delivered. But if we have not this spiritual light to guide us, we walk [r] Job 18. 8, 9, 10. in darknesse, [r] we are *cast into a net by our own feet, and we walk upon a snare. The grin shall take us by the heel, and the robber shall prevail against us. The snare is laid for us in the ground, and a trap for us in the way.*

[s] Isa. 50. 11. Now then, [s] if we walk in the light of our own fire, and in the sparkes that we have kindled, this we shall have of Gods hand, we shall lye down in sorrow.

Thus do spirituall dangers continually attend us, which of our selves we cannot escape; but if we trust in the Name of the Lord, and rest our selves upon God by [t] Psal. 91. 3 faith, [t] he will deliver us from the snare of the fowler, he will direct us in all our wayes, and will guide our feet [u] Jer. 10. 23 into the way of peace: [u] For *the way of man is not in himself*, as saith the Prophet, *it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.* If we are taken in any of these snares that the devil layeth for us, we have no meanes of recovery but by faith and true repentance: for faith in Christ will break the snare, and repentance will draw us out of the pit which did threaten our destruction.

Consider again, that the devil laboureth to insnare us with the alluring baits of pleasure and profit, thereby to draw away our hearts and affections from God; this is a cunning way to deceive us: for we suspect no danger and no evill in those things unto which we are naturally inclined; so that we may easily be deceived with these guilded baits: for without a spiritual light we cannot see the hook that is in them, which will pull us into the pit of perdition.

Thus

[a] Thus the devil can transform himself into an Angel of light, [x] to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. The devil hath so many wayes to intrap us, that we cannot passe thorough this dangerous ocean without shipwrack, except Christ be our Pilot by faith to steer our hearts and affections, and all the faculties of our soules with his Spirit; and then we shall escape all these rocks and quicksands which doe continually threaten the ruine and destruction of our poor soules. We cannot mount above this black cloud of deadly snares and dangers without the wings of faith, and we cannot break the cords of sin without the strength of faith in the death of Christ, neither can we get out of the dominion of sin, without the power of the same faith in Christ.

[a] 2 Cor. 11. 14. [x] Mat. 24. 24.

Such is the goodnesse of our blessed Saviour to us, that he hath not onely given us the shield of faith for our defence against these spiritual enemies, [y] but hath also furnished us with the whole armour of God, which we must put on, and buckle close to us with the girdle of verity apprehended by faith, that we may be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and be able to stand against the wiles of the devill. For we wrestle not against flesh and bloud, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darknesse of this world, and against spiritual wickednes in high places. Also, Christ hath given us the wisdom of his Spirit, so to use every piece of this spiritual armour, that neither by force nor by fraud the devill shall be able to hurt us, or to hinder the salvation of our soules. For Christ knew how violently we should be assaulted, and the weaknesse of our own strength to resist, and how cunningly our enemies would plot to undermine us; and therefore we should need this spiritual armour to defend our selves, and to offend our adversaries, and likewise his Spirit of wisdome, and his almighty power to use that armour as we ought.

[y] Eph. 6.

Fifthly, Faith doth much support and comfort us in all the

the ſorrows and troubles of this life; for ſo long as we live in the fleſh we are ſubject to many tribulations and extremities, which we cannot patiently bear without the help of faith. Princes have their cares, the great men of the world are not free from troubles; there is no condition of life that can challenge a priviledge from worldly incumbrances and miſeries; againſt all which, faith doth comfort the ſervants of God in his promiſes, to uphold them from ſinking under their afflictions, by that vertue and power which they draw thereby from the ſufferings of Chriſt.

Wherefore, if we doe confide in the promiſes of God, and reſt upon them by faith, as made unto us; ſo that we can wait without murmuring Gods own time for the performance of them, they will then ſweeten our ſorrows, eaſe us in our troubles, comfort us in the afflictions of our ſoules, and give us an aſſured hope of deliverance out of our diſtreſſes.

The good Kings of *Juda*, and the valient men of *Iſrael*, obtained many great victories beyond humane expectation, becauſe they believed and reſted upon the word of promiſe which they had from the Lord. [z] When *Joſhua* ſaw divers Kings come againſt him he was afraid, but God did ſtrengthen him with the promiſe of victory, which he reſted upon, and God made his word good unto him. [a] *Baruch* had the like promiſe againſt *Siſera*, which the Lord did faithfully perform. [b] *Ahab* had two great victories over the *Syrians*, though he were a wicked King, becauſe he reſted upon the promiſe of God. [c] *David* overcame the *Philiſtims* becauſe he believed the word of God. [d] Alſo he recovered all the ſpoil that the *Amalekites* had taken out of *Ziglag*, becauſe he truſted to the word of promiſe which he had from God. *David* did find by manifold experience, how faithful God was in the performance of his promiſes, which made him ſo much delight in the Word of God, and ſo often to meditate on his promiſes, which did

[z] Joſh. 11. 6, 8.
[a] Judg. 4.7
[b] 1 King. 20
[c] 1 Chron. 14. 10.
[d] 1 Sam. 30. 8.

did exceedingly ſtrengthen him in all his afflictions and troubles. [e] *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord deliuereth him out of th. m all.* [f] *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me.* [g] *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.* Thus may a poor ſoul cheer up his drouping ſpirits, when his mind is perplexed, or when troubles and ſorrows compaſſe him about on every ſide, if he hath a word of promiſe from God to reſt upon.

[e] Pſa. 34. 19
[f] Pſa. 50. 15
[g] Pſa. 42. 11

When God doth viſit us with afflictions, he hath then ſome work to doe in us for his own glory and for our good, and we muſt then make uſe of our faith, which will help us much to joyn with him in his own work, becauſe he intendeth our good thereby, and then he will the ſooner remove his rod of correction from us. We may underſtand what Gods purpoſe is, when his rod is upon us, if we mark and obſerve in what manner he doth viſit us; and alſo if we doe truly examine our ſteps, how we walk before God from day to day; for then we ſhall diſcover what good we have omitted, and what evill we have committed, and we ſhall find ſome ſweet motions of his Sprit to direct us what we ought to doe for the more ſpeedy effecting of his work in us. If our conſcience doth tell us of ſome particular ſinnes that have provoked God againſt us, then he will puniſh us according to the nature of thoſe ſins.

If we are too much addicted to the world he will viſit us with croſſes, loſſes, and troubles in our eſtate; if we are in danger of ſpiritual pride, he will pull us down with a thorn in the fleſh, or ſend a Meſſenger of Satan to buffet us, [h] as he did *Paul*. If we are too fond and indulgent to our children, he will either take them away, or viſit us with ſorrowes and grief of heart in them, as it was with *David*. If we have any darling ſin, as *Sampſon* had his *Dalilah*, God will make that very ſin to be bitterneſſe

[h] 2 Cor. 12. 7.

to

to us in the end, if by faith in Christ we have not a sweeter taste of the love and goodnesse of God to us. If God seeth us secure, or presuming upon our own strength, he will withdraw his assisting grace, and suffer us to fall into many temptations, and into grosse sins, as he did *Peter*, to make us more watchful over our wayes, and to depend more upon him.

Thus we may find what God intendeth when we are under his visitation: for then God calls for true humiliation and repentance for that very sin, which he hath discovered to us, and a true turning from it unto God, with a faithful indeavour to better obedience; and then he will forgive our sin, and heal our disease by faith in the bloud of Christ.

But if our conscience doth clear us, and yet Gods visitation is upon us, it is then to exercise us under the crosse, to be made conformable unto Christ our head in his sufferings, or to try our faith, our patience, our hope and affiance in God, and what constancy we have to continue faithful to the end, though God should delay to remove the crosse from us, all which do tend to the glory of God and to our own good. [i] The man in the Gospel was blind from his birth, and yet neither he nor his parents had sinned, but it was, that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

[i] John 9. 3

Lastly, God doth sometimes visit us with afflictions, to stir us up to more frequency and fervency of prayer, untill we are delivered out of our troubles. Howsoever; or to what end soever God doth visit us, our faith in Christ will stand us in great stead, to support us in our sufferings and tryals, and to make the right use of all Gods dealings with us, that our soules may receive profit and comfort thereby.

If we did live in sad and mournful times, when we could scarcely see any thing but oppression, injustice, rapine and wrong, [k] when the Judges *judge unjustly*, as the Psalmist saith, *and accept the persons of the wicked, and*

[k] Ps 82. 2, 3

doe

doe not defend the poor and fatherleſſe, nor doe juſtice to the afflicted and needy: when the Church of God is under affliction, and torn in pieces by perſecutors and ſpoilers, with ſects and ſciſmes, and the ſincere Word of God corrupted with humane inventions, or elſe troden down by the authority of unjuſt men: then were the time to live by faith, and to ſtrengthen our faith with firm hope, that God will ariſe, as the ſame Pſalmiſt ſaith, and judge the earth, and will ſend deliverance to his Church in his good time, and that he will awake, as a Gyant out of ſleep, to avenge the deſolations thereof, and the oppreſſions of his people. In the mean time we ſhould remember thoſe that ſuffer in our prayers, and comfort our ſelves with faith in the promiſes of God, waiting with patience for the ſalvation of God, when he will viſit his people in mercy, and remember what his Church hath ſuffered, and by whom, to render to every man according to his works.

Among many calamities that God doth ſometimes bring upon a nation, or a people, to humble them for their ſinnes, to rouſe them up out of ſecurity, to pull down their pride, and to break their ſtubborn hearts, this is one of the greateſt, when he doth take away the pillars of his Church, and doth ſuffer it to be underpropt with weak meanes: for though it may ſtand for ſome ſhort time, yet it cannot continue long; for if the winds doe blow, or the billows of the ſea riſe againſt it, they will ſhake it, and much indanger the fall of it. This was *Davids* requeſt unto God in the like caſe, *Help Lord, for the godly man ceaſeth, for the faithfull fail from among the children of men.* When we ſee theſe things come to paſſe we had need cry mightily to the God of our ſalvation for his help, for they are fore-runners of great calamities. But we truſt that God will not bring ſuch viſitations upon us, but that he will pitty us, as a father pittieth his child upon his ſubmiſſion to his will, though by reaſon of our ſinnes and rebellions againſt [1 Pſal. 12. 1.]

his sacred Majesty, we have deserved no pity.

Now then, if these things be well considered, thou wilt find, that whatsoever thy condition of life be, that sorrows and troubles will daily attend thee, that the corruptions of thy nature will break out upon thee, to make thee fail of thy duty to God, to make thee yeild to sinful motions, and to fall sometimes into grosse sinnes, and so to loose the sense of Gods grace and favour, which doth more perplex the soul of a true Christian, than to suffer the greatest miseries; but here is thy comfort, that if thou hast faith in Christ, thou wilt rest upon him; for he will support thee in all thy sorrows, he will free thee from all thy sinnes, and will procure thy pardon upon thy true repentance, and he will bring thee again into the favour of God by the merit of his bloud. Nothing can make thee so unhappy, and so comfortlesse, but that true faith well grounded upon Christ, and upon the promises of God, will take away the apprehension of thy unhappinesse, and will give thee true consolation in the assurance of the love and favour of God to thee in Christ.

Sixtly, Faith will give us comfort in all the pious actions of our life: for by our union with Christ, God will accept for his sake both of our persons and of our works, whether they be works of piety to God, or works of charity to our neighbour.

That our works may be such as God requireth, first, the Word of God must be our rule to teach us to frame our actions according to the will of God, and not according to the conceit of our own fancie.

Secondly, Our works must be such as come within the compasse of our calling, either publick or private, otherwise we have no ground to believe that God will accept them. [m] *Uzzah* was stricken dead for staying the Ark when it was shaken in the cart, because he had no calling for it. God requireth that we should teach, instruct, and admonish our children and servants in the wayes of god-

m 2 Sam. 6. 7

godlineſſe, but if we preſume to execute the office and function of the Miniſter without a lawfull calling thereunto, God may ſet his mark upon us for our preſumption, [a] as he did upon King *Uzziah*, for *going into the Temple of the LORD to burn incenſe upon the Altar which pertained not unto him to do.* [a] 2 Chro. 26.

Thirdly, we muſt take the time and opportunity that God gives us for any good action, and not to put it off with delayes: for that is the time which he will accept. God hath ſet apart one day in ſeven for his peculiar ſervice, and for good works, which is the Lords Day, and that day muſt be wholely ſanctified to him.

Fourthly, our Adoption by Faith in Chriſt will ſtrongly move us to perform good works and holy duties out of a filiall love to God, and not out of a ſlaviſh fear, to do them willingly in obedience to Gods command, and not upon conſtraint; alſo, with an holy zeal, and not with a blinde devotion, [o] like the *Atheniant*, who *worſhipped an unknown God.* [p] *David* did counſel his ſon *Solomon* to *worſhip God with a willing minde, for God accepteth free-will offerings.* But if we are forced to the ſervice of God like ſlaves for fear of puniſhment, our ſervice will not be well accepted. [o] Acts 17. 24. [p] 1 Chro. 28. 9.

Fifthly, Faith will make us do all our religious duties with chearful hearts and pure affections to the glory of God: [q] *for the Lord conſidereth all our works.* Thus God ſaith by *Solomon*, [r] *My ſon give me thy heart.* And thus ſaith the Apoſtle, [ſ] *God loveth a chearfull giver.* [q] Pſal. 33. 15. [r] Prov. 23. 26. [ſ] 2 Cor. 9. 7.

Laſtly, Faith will make us conſtant in well-doing, which will crown all our good actions with gracious acceptation; ſo that we have reſpect, [t] as holy *David* had *to all Gods Commandements*; then if we do our beſt endeavour in Gods ſervice, though we fail of our duty, or fall through frailty and infirmity; [u] God in mercy will heal our backſlidings, and will accept of our imperfect performances, becauſe we have relation unto Chriſt by Faith. [t] Pſal. 119. 6. [u] Hoſ. 14. 4.

Now then if we will ſtrictly examine the actions of our lives by thoſe former directions, we ſhall eaſily find whether our works and ſervices to God have been ſuch as he requireth, and performed according to his will, that we may have peace of conſcience in them here, and eternal comfort by them hereafter. If we can find by this inquiry, that our works have been the fruits of Faith, and that we have done our duty to the beſt of our power with a faithful heart to the honour of God, and not out of pride or vain-glory, to get the praiſe of men, as the hypocrites do, or to any other by-end, then our Faith will ſhine forth in our works, and God will graciouſly accept them.

But if the actions of our life have been evill, they will follow us for evill, when we lye down, and when we riſe up, and whitherſoever we go. If we ſleep or wake, they will moleſt and trouble us, they will aggravate our ſorrowes in our afflictions, and our pains in ſickneſſe, they will imbitter all the comforts of our life, and increaſe the fear and terrour of death, for they will come into our remembrance, when we lye upon our death-beds, to vex and terrifie our very ſouls, and to make us uncapable of any heavenly conſolation, untill the guilt of ſin that cleaveth to them be taken away by Faith in the blood of Chriſt.

Alſo, [u] our evill works will follow us unto judge-
[u] Rev. 14. 13 ment, to accuſe us before the great and dreadful Judge,
[x] and then God will judge us according to them: if they
[x] Rev. 20. 13 be found wicked and ſinful, we cannot but expect the dreadful ſentence of condemnation to be pronounced againſt us. Alſo, after judgement they will increaſe our torments in hell, if we do not prevent it in time by our true repentance while we live here in this life.

Laſtly, Faith will fit and prepare us for a bleſſed and a comfortable death: for by it we ſhall ſteer the whole
[y] 1 Cor. 1. 10. courſe of our lives to the honour of [y] God, & it will make

us

us fruitfull in every good work; that they may be rightly done, both for the matter, and for the manner, and alſo to the right end, as God hath appointed them: we cannot then but live vertuouſly and piouſly in the true fear of God, and he will reward us of his free bounty and goodneſſe, though not of merit. God will remember our works if they are done in ſincerity, and in truth; to comfort us in the ſadneſſe of our hearts, to eaſe us in the extremity of pain, and ſickneſſe, and to give us a peaceable and a quiet conſcience in the aſſurance of the pardon of our ſins, and of his grace and favour, before the hour of our diſſolution ſhall come upon us. Such good works will adorn our profeſſion, and make our lives comfortable to us, and our converſation ſutable to our profeſſion, and they will follow us for our good whitherſoever we go: for there is no guilt of ſin that cleaves to them, becauſe Chriſt hath taken it away; whereof we are fully perſwaded by Faith. [a] If we can with good *Nehemiah*, put God in remembrance of our good deeds, how will it ſtrengthen our hope and truſt in God, for his protection in all dangers, for his help and ſuccour in all our diſtreſſes, and for his aſſiſtance when we undertake any ſpeciall buſineſſe? what ſweet conſolation will it be to us, when we are upon our death-beds, if with a clear conſcience we can put God in minde, [a] as King *Hezekiah* did, that *we have walked before him in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which was good in his ſight?* If we thus live, and thus dye, we may then ſay with *Paul*, [b] *Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we dye we dye unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or dye we are the Lords.* [c] *John heard a voice from heaven ſaying unto him, Bleſſed are the dead which dye in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

[a] Neh. 13. 14.

[a] Iſa. 38. 3.

[b] Rom. 14. 8.

[c] Rev. 14. 13.

We may confidently believe that their condition is moſt bleſſed; becauſe it is the voice of the ſpirit of truth that doth affirm it.

We

We have alſo great encouragement to be fruitfull in good works; becauſe they will go with us even to the Tribunall ſeat of God: for Chriſt hath faſtned them to our ſouls, that God may then look upon them, and remember them for the increaſe of our joy and happineſſe hereafter.

If we do now ruminate well upon all theſe ſeveral excellent benefits and comforts that come by a true and lively faith in our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, we may draw ſweet and heavenly Meditations from thence for the comfort of our ſouls againſt the power of the devill, the rigour of the Law, the dominion of ſin, the fear of death, and againſt eternal condemnation. For we ſhall finde, that hereby we are ingrafted into Chriſt, who hath redeemed us from all iniquity, and from whatſoever our ſins have made us lyable unto, and hath cleanſed us from all the pollutions and defilements of ſin, he hath made us the adopted ſons of God, and hath given us all the priviledges that do belong unto Sons. Alſo, we ſhall finde, that by Chriſt we are inveſted into the Covenant of grace, and have right to all the gracious promiſes of God, which will ſweetly refreſh our ſouls in all fears and doubtings, in all difficulties and dangers, in all extremities and diſtreſſes, if we can apply them to our ſouls by Faith, and reſt upon them with ſtedfaſt hope.

Wherefore let this be the Meditation of our hearts, and the deſire of our ſouls, to have a near communion with Chriſt, that we may ſay with the Spouſe, [d] *My beloved is mine, and I am his*; or to ſay thus with *Paul*, [e] *I am crucified with Chriſt; Nevertheleſſe I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himſelf for me.*

[d] Cant. 2. 16

[e] Gal. 2. 20.

This particular application of Chriſt to our ſelves will draw from him the richeſt Jewels that are in his Treaſury; the richeſt robe, and the beſt garments that are in his War-

Wardrope, and his very heart-blood for our redemption.

If we look a little lower, and fix our Meditations upon the holy Ordinances of God, we ſhall finde that which will ſweetly comfort and delight our hearts, if we have Faith to underſtand and believe what the holy Ghoſt ſaith to us in them for our inſtruction and conſolation.

It was Davids delight to Meditate on the Law of God, becauſe he found great ſweetneſſe in it. [f] *How ſweet,* ſaith he, *are thy words unto my taſte? Yea, ſweeter than hony to my mouth* [f] Pſal. 119. 163.

If we had *Davids* ſpiritual palate, [g] we ſhould delight in the Lords-Sabbath, as he ſaith by his Prophet, we ſhould delight to hear his Word, to come to his holy Table, to meditate on his Law, and to practiſe all holy duties to the honour and glory of his Name. Alſo, if we do ſet our ſelves to Meditate on the ſtrength and power of his grace, we ſhall finde that Faith will give us ſufficient power againſt all our ſpiritual enemies; hope will uphold our Faith in the promiſes of God, when it is weak; patience will make us bear our afflictions and tryalls with a willing minde; holy zeal will make our Prayers effectual to prevail with God to grant what we deſire, or what is better for us; and conſtancy will make us continue in well-doing unto the end, that we may receive that recompence of reward, which God of his infinite goodneſſe hath promiſed. As Faith is the Mother of all other ſpiritual graces, ſo it will alwayes go along with every particular grace, to make it the more effectual and powerful to help us in time of need. [g] Iſa. 58. 13.

Now we know the quickneſſe of our ſpirituall taſte by our delight in holy duties, and in the Ordinances of God; and we may know the ſtrength of grace by the fruits and effects of it, according to the nature of every particular grace; alſo the truth of every grace that is in

in us will appear, and that it is a fruit of Faith, if the power of Faith goeth along with it.

How to increaſe Faith.

EVery man hath not alike meaſure of Faith, he that is weakeſt in Faith, may be made ſtronger, and he that is ſtrong in Faith may yet have more; for it is a ſpiritual and heavenly grace which will grow and increaſe, if it be ſpiritually watered by the holy Ghoſt. Chriſt did find a great Faith in the Woman of *Canaan*, and in ſome others. [a] *O woman*, ſaith he to her, *great is thy faith.* but he did often reprove his Diſciples for the weakneſſe of their Faith; and thus he ſaid in particular unto *Peter*, [b] *O thou of little faith; wherefore didſt thou doubt?* *Peters* doubting made him ready to ſink, as he walked upon the waters unto Chriſt, and it did diſcover the weakneſſe of his Faith and confidence in Chriſt, as if he could not give him power to walk upon the waters as he did.

[a] Mat. 15. 28.

[b] Mat. 14. 31.

This is the condition of many of Gods dear ſervants, that when they ſee perills and dangers ready to fall upon them, and no means either to eſcape them, or to be delivered from them; then fears and doubtings will riſe in their mindes, to diſcover the weakneſſe of their Faith, and to make them diſtruſt the providence of God, to doubt of his Fatherly care of them, and of his Almighty Power to ſave them. For ſometimes their Faith may be ſo weak, that it cannot mount above their humane capacity, & they cannot ſee the wiſdom, and power of God to be far above the reach of their reaſon and underſtanding. When God ſeeth ſuch weakneſſe in our Faith, he will tenderly viſite us, and will give us hope by ſome manifeſt ſignes to ſtrengthen our faith againſt all our fears and doubtings.

Though

Though our faith be weak, yet if it be true, it is saving, it is growing, and it is lasting. Faith is saving, because it doth unite us unto Christ with an unseparable union, who is the rock of our salvation, and by whom onely we must be saved. [c] Christ is that stone which was set at nought of the builders, which is become the head of the corner: Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Also, we may grow in faith. [c] Act. 4. 11, 12.

First, [d] if we desire the sincere milk of the Word, as new born babes desire the milk of the breast, that we may thereby grow in the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ. If the word of God be purely Preached without the mixture of erroneous doctrine, it is the seed of grace, which God soweth in our hearts by his Ministers, and he will water it with his Spirit, to make it increase and fructifie, that we may grow in grace, until we come to a full stature in Christ, if we do hear it with sanctified hearts, and pure affections. [d] 1 Pet. 2.

Secondly, we may greatly increase our faith in Christ, if we do spiritually feed upon his body and blood, when we come to the Lords Table, which is the true food of our souls, and the heavenly nourishment of that spiritual life, which we have in Christ by Faith; and the oftner we do thus feed at the Lords Table, the more we cherish this spiritual life, and the more we increase our Faith, and make all other saving graces the stronger in us.

Thirdly, prayer is a speciall meanes for the increase of our Faith, for we have the beginnings of Faith from God, the increase of it also, and the stablishment of it is from God, and we must beg it of him by our Prayers and supplications, or else we cannot obtain it. Thus said the Apostles unto Christ, [e] *Lord increase our Faith.* Also, thus said the Father of the dumb childe unto Christ, [f] *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.* God is ready to hear the Prayers of his servants; but specially when they make such petiti- [e] Lu. 17. 5. [f] Mar. 9. 24.

tions as he is willing to grant, which are ſuch as do make moſt for his own glory; and nothing can advance the glory of God more than when they crave the increaſe of their Faith, without which they can glorifie God in no ſervices which they perform unto him: for without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, and ſo conſequently to honour him in any holy duty which he commandeth.

Fourthly, Faith will grow and increaſe by our dayly Meditation on the Truth of Gods Word, how faithfully he hath performed all his Promiſes, how ready and how able he is ſtill to perform them, if we can reſt and depend upon them by Faith. If we conſider that God is immutable and omnipotent in his own Eſſence, that he is Truth it ſelf, that he will not alter whatſoever he hath decreed in his ſecret Counſel, and that he will perform all that he hath promiſed in his Word, it will greatly ſtrengthen our Faith, and uphold our truſt and confidence in God, when any difficulties or dangers preſſe hard upon us, which otherwiſe would ſhake the foundation of our faith.

Fifthly the dayly experience which we have of the power of God, and of his goodneſſe to us in all conditions of life, whether we be in proſperity or in adverſity, in health, or in ſickneſſe, under the croſſe, or under the buffetings of Satan; this will much increaſe our Faith, and confirm our hope and confidence in God. 8 This conſideration made *David* bold to encounter with *Goliah* that great Gyant, becauſe God had formerly delivered him from the paw of the Lyon, and from the paw of the Bear, and therefore he would now deliver him from that uncircumciſed *Philiſtine*. We ſhould make the ſame uſe of the former experience that we have any way had of the goodneſſe and mercy of God to us, to ſtrengthen our faith and affiance in God, when we are in any diſtreſſe, and can ſee no means to give us any hope of ſafety or of deliverance.

1 Sam. 17. 37.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, if we be of low eſteem in our own eyes, and poor in ſpirit, to walk humbly before God in a true ſight and ſenſe of our unworthineſſe, and of our emptineſſe of grace and goodneſs; then God will give us more grace, more holy zeal, and he will make us rich in faith, [h] for *God reſiſteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.* [h] 1 Pet. 5.

Thus we may have more ſtrength of Faith from God; becauſe he will deal like a tender father with theſe that know their own weakneſſe, to ſupply their wants with a gracious increaſe of their Faith: [i] for, *he will not break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flax*, neither will he require of the weak ſo much as of theſe that are ſtrong in Faith, and whatſoever he requireth of them, he will give ſuch abilities of grace, as ſhall make them able to perform it. [i] Iſa. 42. 3.

Laſtly, if we deſire to have our Faith increaſed, we muſt take heed that we give no liberty to ſin: for that will weaken our Faith, it will ſtop the influence of grace to our hearts, and hinder the free operations of the holy Ghoſt in us. How can we confide and truſt in Gods mercy and goodneſſe, when we have deſerved his wrath and diſpleaſure for ſome ſin that doth over-power us without repentance? How can grace be ſtrong in us; if ſin doth ſtill reign in our mortall bodies? There can be no increaſe of Faith, if ſin be ſtrong in us. If God is pleaſed to try our faith, or any other grace that is in us, as he did *Abrahams* Faith, *Joſephs chaſtity*, and *Jobs* patience, we ſhall be found very weak, if our conſcience can accuſe us of any ſin that is not mortified and ſubdued in us.

Wherefore now, if thou art conſcious of the weakneſs of thy Faith, by thine inability to reſiſt any temptation, or provocation unto ſin, by thy wavering and doubting in the true performance of Gods Promiſes, if they are above thy capacity, and by thy perplexed fears, when troubles or dangers are ready to ſeize upon thee; thou muſt not look upon thine own deſervings, except it be

for thy humiliation: for thou must know that God did not make his gracious promises for thy sake, though they were made for thy good; but God made them to thee for the sake of Christ, in whom was the perfection of all merit, [k] *and in whom all the Promises of God are, yea, and Amen*; so that if thou art in Christ, thou hast no cause to question the performance of any of Gods promises. Also, for the increase of thy Faith meditate piously upon those former directions, and then have recourse by Prayer to thy blessed Saviour, and he will uphold thy Faith against all adversary power that shall oppose it. But if thou art not in Christ, no promise of grace belongs unto thee, and thou canst finde no comfort therein.

k 2 Cor. 1. 20

How to esteem of Faith.

THough it be sufficient highly to prize and esteem of true justifying Faith, if we do duly weigh and consider those excellent benefits and comforts of Faith formerly set down to make us happy here in this life, and eternally blessed in the life to come; yet the great worth and esteem of it will further appear by these following considerations, which the holy Ghost hath set down in the sacred Scriptures.

First, the holy Ghost hath set severall high commendations on it, as a thing of great price: [a] for, by *Peter* he calls it precious Faith; because it is grounded upon the righteousnesse of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and because we do injoy Christ himself by it. We must needs therefore esteem it as a most precious Jewell; because God will bestow it upon none but such as are his dear children, and elected unto salvation. Holy *David* was a great King, renowned for his honour, riches and valour, he was victorious in all his battels, and he prospered in all his enterprises; yet his faith and hope was in none

a 2 Pet. 1. 20

none of these: [b] but *his trust was in the Lord.* He did slight all his earthly greatnesse, and did count himself happy onely by his faith in God, for thus he saith, [c] *Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust.* But some have no regard to fix their faith on God; for they put their confidence in the arm of flesh; in the multitude of their Host, and in the strength of their Chariots and Horsemen; these have no ground for their faith to rest upon, but what this world can afford them, which they will finde to be vain, and like a broken reed, no way able to save them. *Hadadezer* trusted in his Chariots and Horsemen; [d] but *David smote him with a very great slaughter, and took from him a thousand chariots,* because he trusted in the Lord.

[b] Psal. 9.

[c] Psal. 40.

[d] 2 Sam. 8.

[e] *Zerah* the *Ethiopian* put his trust in his numerous Army, which was a thousand thousand, but the Lord overthrew them before King *Asa.* The faith that worldly men have in their riches, and in their greatnesse, is not this faith which is so precious, and so much to be esteemed: for their faith is grounded upon worldly strength, and it reacheth no further than humane reason can carry it; no marvell then if it do deceive them in the end.

[e] 2 Chron. 14. 9.

But the Faith of a true Christian is fixed upon Christ, and upon no other object, who is a sure rock to rest upon, and it reacheth up to heaven, even to God himself, and it will fetch down help and succour, comfort and consolation from him upon all occasions when we need it. *Jude* calls it [f] *most holy faith*; because it maketh us holy in the sight of God, by putting upon us the righteousnesse of Christ, and because by it, as it hath relation unto Christ, our Prayers and all other our services to God are holy and acceptable to him.

[f] Jude 20.

Wherefore, seeing Faith is so precious, that God will bestow it upon none but upon his own children, and so holy that it maketh all our services to God to be holy, we ought to esteem it as a pearl of great price, and to keep it as a most precious Jewell.

Secondly, we ſhould highly prize our Faith, becauſe it is the principall grace that the holy Ghoſt worketh in our hearts, and it maketh all other graces profitable, and effectuall to us according to their ſeverall natures. Our repentance is not ſound and true, if it be not a fruit of Faith: for we cannot truly humble our ſelves before God, and freely confeſſe our ſins unto him with a contrite heart, if we do not look upon him as our mercifull Father, by Faith in Chriſt, that we may have good hope of the pardon of our ſins; neither can we ſhew any fruits of repentance by mortifying the corruptions of our nature but by the vertue and power of Chriſts death, which we muſt draw to our ſelves by Faith, and alſo by our regeneration to newneſſe of life, but by the power of his reſurrection, which we muſt alſo have by faith. Our repentance can give us no holy aſſurance of the remiſſion of our ſins, if we do not believe that Chriſt hath fully ſatisfied the juſtice of God for them all by the me-
[f] Lu.22.19 rit of his death. [g] We cannot poſſeſſe our ſouls in patience when we ſuffer afflictions and tribulations, and when we are under the croſſe, if we do not belive that Chriſt hath ſanctified our ſufferings to make them work for our good, and that [h] *through much tribulation we*
[g] Ac.14.22 *muſt enter into the Kingdom of heaven.* We cannot love God with true filiall love, nor obey him with filiall reverence and fear, if we are not perſwaded of our adopti-
Dan.10.42 on in Chriſt by Faith. [i] Our works of charity will not be accepted, unleſſe they are done in Faith, as to the Diſciples of Chriſt, and then we ſhall not loſe our reward.

Thus doth Faith put life and vigour into all other graces to make them effectuall and powerfull for our ſanctification, and for the ſpirituall comfort of our ſouls, which is a ſpecial conſideration to make us account of our faith as a principall Grace, without which we can have no hope of ſalvation.

Mat.13.46 Thirdly, [k] Faith is that Pearl of great price, which the Mer-

Merchant man in the Goſpel found, and ſold all that he had to buy it: for no humane learning, no abilities of nature, no wealth, or riches can purchaſe; we muſt renounce our truſt in all theſe before we can buy this rich pearl: for it is above the ſtrength of nature to attain unto it, and no power of men or Angels can procure it; but we muſt have it of the holy Ghoſt, he keeps it in his own power, and we may have it of him without money and without price, if in the true humiliation of our ſpirits we beg it of him. But if we ſeek to buy this pearl of the world, we ſhall pay dear for it, and yet not have the right Pearl; the luſtre of theſe pearls can reach no further than to the object of the eye; but the luſtre of this true Orientall Pearl will ſhine in all dark places of woe and miſery, and it will pierce the very heavens to the eye of God himſelf. Notwithſtanding we do ſo highly value the pearls that nature or this world doth afford us, that we will take any pains, or be at any coſt to gain ſome of them, though they are of no worth to reſt upon, when we are in any ſpirituall miſery whatſoever; but as for this precious Pearl we are loath to part with any thing for it, that by nature is near, or dear to us, or wherein we take pleaſure and delight. Thus we delude our ſelves with vain hopes, and we reſt upon that which cannot help; becauſe we know not the worth of true Faith, to make it the inſtrument of our truſt and confidence in God through Chriſt.

Let this conſideration alſo advance the eſtimation of Faith in our hearts and affections; becauſe by it we gain Chriſt with all his excellencies, and in Chriſt we gain the ir yment of the grace and favour of God, and the aſſurance of eternall ſalvation.

Wherefore if this be the tranſcendent worth of true Faith, we ſhould then with all care and diligence ſeek out where it is to be had, and labour by all means to obtain it. If God ſeeth this holy deſire in us, he will then give us to underſtand by his Spirit, that this rich pearl is

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no where to be found but in his own Cabinet; alſo, he will prepare our hearts and our will for it, he will anoint our eyes with ſpirituall eye-ſalve to finde it, and he will direct us to the means how we may obtain it.

[l] Eph. 2. 8. Firſt, therefore we muſt know, [l] that Faith is onely the gift of God, which he beſtoweth upon whom he [m] Eph. 1. 19 pleaſeth, [m] and he works it in us by his mighty power.

Secondly, God will give us hearts to ſeek it of him by fervent Prayer, which is a powerfull means to obtain any thing of God.

Thirdly, his Spirit will go along with the Preaching of his Word, that if we hear it with ſincere affections, [n] Rom. 10. 17. it may work Faith in us: [n] for, *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Laſtly, when we have found this precious Pearl in his Word, God will make us willing to buy it, though we give for it our ſouls, and all the faculties thereof, our hearts, our affections, and all the parts of our bodies; all which muſt be given up to the Lord, or elſe we cannot injoy true faith: and yet this is not all; for we muſt empty our ſelves of all conceit of our own worth, and quite renounce all confidence in worldly things, all ſinfull pleaſures, and every ſin that preſſeth us down, or that cleaveth cloſe to us, or elſe we cannot obtain this precious Pearl of God.

Fourthly, we may conceive that Faith is of great eſtimation; becauſe it is ſo rarely found upon earth. [o] Lu. 18. 8. Thus ſaith our Saviour Chriſt concerning Faith; [o] *When the Son of man cometh, ſhall he finde faith on the earth?* It is ſuch a rare Jewell as is ſcarcely to be found, few do injoy it, and none can rightly eſteem of it, but onely ſuch [p] Rev. 2. 17. as have it. [p] Chriſt promiſeth to give *a white ſtone to him that overcometh, and in this ſtone a new name is written, which no man knoweth ſaving he that receiveth it.* We cannot obtain this white ſtone of purity, righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe but by Faith; whereby we are cloathed with the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, which is this white

ſtone;

ſtone; alſo, we ſhall know this new name that is written in it: for by Faith we ſhall put on Chriſt, and ſhall be made new creatures, to live as becometh new Chriſtians in newneſſe of life, and in uprightneſſe of converſation.

It is true which *Paul* ſaith, [q] *that all men have not faith*, for there is ſo much wickedneſſe, fraud, deceit, and unbelief among men, that true faith can hardly be found; as it is written, [r] *There is none righteous, no not one: there is none that underſtandeth, there is none that ſeeketh after God, there is none that doth good, no not one.* Moſt men fix their faith upon wrong objects, which will deceive them in the end: ſome upon falſe gods, as upon *Aſhteroth, Chemoſh, Dagon, Belzebub*: and the like, others put their confidence & truſt in the arm of fleſh, in ſtrong towers, or in the creature, as *Senacherib, Nebuchadnezzar*, and others: ſome again ground their faith upon their works; all which delude themſelves with vain hopes, thinking to find help and comfort in theſe falſe objects, where none can be expected. But the true object of this Divine grace is God himſelf, upon whom onely we muſt fix our Faith: for if we truſt in him we ſhall not be confounded. Many have the notion of Faith in their brain, but not the grace of Faith in their hearts, and many have the outward profeſſion of Faith, but not the vertue and power of it to lay hold upon Chriſt, and to make him their onely truſt and confidence. The Souldiers Faith is in his valour: for he believeth not that [s] God teacheth his hands to war, and his fingers to fight, and that he giveth victory to whom and when he pleaſeth. If the Magiſtrate did believe [t] that he had his power and authority from God, to uſe it in juſtice and in truth, to whom he muſt give an account, how he hath relieved the oppreſſed, and how he hath judged the cauſe of the fatherleſſe and Widow, he would not then ſtrain the Lawes beyond their true meaning, nor pervert judgement for anjuſt ends. The rich mans confidence is in his wealth and goods, not believing

[q] 2 Theſſ. 3.
[r] Rom. 3. 10, 11.
[s] Pſ. 144. 1.
[t] Rom. 13. 1.

believing, that this night they may be taken from him, or he from them. All theſe and many more come ſhort of true juſtifying faith, and therefore they know not the ſingular worth and eſteem of it.

Wherefore, it is evident that this heavenly grace is peculiar onely to the Elect of God, ſuch as are true Chriſtians, and ſuch as are poor in ſpirit and humble minded, that know the worth of this precious Jewell, that do earneſtly ſeek for it, and uſe the right means to obtain it: theſe onely are willing and ready to apply themſelves unto God by prayer and ſupplication, that he will be pleaſed to work it in their hearts by his Spirit, that it may be firmly grounded upon Chriſt, that onely he may be the Object of their Faith, in whom dwelleth all fulneſſe, and who onely is able to ſupport, help and comfort them in all their neceſſities, both ſpirituall and temporall; and as he is able, ſo he is as willing to do it. Wherefore they do renounce all other confidence, and they ſtick cloſe unto Chriſt, they reſt and depend upon him, uſing the means which he hath appointed to make their lives comfortable here, and eternally bleſſed in the world to come.

Laſtly, the great eſtimation that we ought to have of Faith will appear by this conſideration, that the devill doth moſt oppoſe it, and ſeeketh by all means to hinder the working, and the growth of it in our hearts; becauſe it is the onely inſtrument of our ſalvation by Chriſt. We cannot conceive what ſtratagems he will cunningly uſe to deceive us, and if it were poſſible to overthrow our faith. Firſt, he will aſſault us with his temptations and evil ſuggeſtions, as he did *David*, when he numbered the people, to make him truſt more in his own ſtrength, than in God. Secondly, he will labour by his ſubtile perſwaſions to keep us ſtill in unbelief, or elſe to make us preſume of ſalvation by the mercies of God without Faith in Chriſt. Thirdly, he will delude us with a temporary faith, which will not bear us out in ſtrong tryals and temptations, and ſo to

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loſe the time, and opportunity that God doth give us for the obtaining of true ſaving Faith. Fourthly, he doth bewitch us with the ſinfull delights and vanities of this world, to ſteal away our hearts from God, and to keep us from a firm truſt and confidence in him; or elſe to keep us under the ſlavery and bondage of ſome ſin, which will nip the fruits of our faith, and keep it from increaſe. Laſtly to further his wicked deſign, he will labour to hold us in ignorance and blindneſſe, that we ſhould not ſee our own miſerable condition, nor know how to get out of it.

Thus the Devil doth ſet himſelf againſt Faith; becauſe upon it dependeth our hope of ſalvation, and becauſe it is the chief piece of our ſpirituall armour, to reſiſt and conquer him, and it is a ſhield ſo ſtrong, that his fiery darts cannot pierce it, to wound or hurt our ſouls. Wherefore we muſt look well to our Faith, that the devil do not undermine it: for then he will rob us of theſe bleſſed fruits that come thereby. But our hope is in the promiſes of God, and in the interceſſion of Chriſt, as a ſure Anchor to uphold and ſtrengthen our Faith, that it fail not, though it be aſſaulted with much malice and violence.

In all ages the Devil hath had his wicked inſtruments, which have turned many away from the Faith, and have oppoſed the Prophets and Miniſters of God, and have perſecuted thoſe that did profeſſe the Name of Chriſt, to make them forſake the Faith. [u] Thus he made the Serpent his inſtrument to deceive *Eve*. [x] Thus he made *Zedekiah* to withſtand good *Michaiah*, and to ſeduce King *Ahab* from following the word of the Lord. [y] Thus alſo *Elimas* the ſorcerer withſtood *Paul* and *Barnabas*, ſeeking to turn away *Sergius Paulus* the Deputy from the Faith, to whom *Paul* ſaid, *O full of all ſubtilty and all miſchief, thou childe of the devil, thou enemy of all righteouſneſſe, wilt thou not ceaſe to pervert the right wayes of the Lord?* Thus alſo the devil doth ſometimes prevail againſt

[u] Gen. 3.
[x] 1 Kin. 22.
[y] Acts 13. 8, 10.

1 King. 13. the ſervants of God. He made the old Prophet to ſeduce the man of God that was ſent to *Bethel*, and to tranſgreſſe the Commandement of God.

This ſhould teach us the more highly to love and prize Faith; becauſe the devil ſo much hates it, and to ſtick the cloſer to it; becauſe he doth ſo much oppoſe it. This ſhould alſo teach us to love thoſe that wicked men hate, and to hate thoſe that they love: if we obſerve what they do moſt delight in, we ſhould hate their vice, and love the contrary vertue. If they delight in gluttony or riot, we ſhould hate that, and love temperance and ſobriety: if they take pleaſure in uncleanneſſe, then we ſhould love chaſtity. If they delight in pride, we ſhould delight in humility, and lowlineſſe of Spirit: they have ſo much of the devils nature in them, that they cannot truly love any thing that is pious and holy, becauſe it is that which God loveth; neither can they hate any thing that is wicked and ſinfull; becauſe it is ſo agreeable to their nature, and they have no grace to check their corrupted nature for loving that which God hateth, and hath forbidden: whereas a regenerate man will find that the Spirit of grace which is in him, will give him a ſecret check, if his unregenerate part doth take pleaſure and delight in any thing that is ſinfull: for he muſt not conform himſelf to the faſhion of the world.

The ſenſe of faith may be loſt.

BY faith in Chriſt we injoy the light of Gods countenance, and his aſſiſting Grace, which is our greateſt comfort in all miſery and diſtreſſe: and ſo long as we do injoy that, we are ſenſible of our faith, and we feel the comfort of it: but when God doth hide his face from us, and withdraw his aſſiſting grace, it is the greateſt trouble that can betide us, it takes away the comfort of faith from our ſoules, and leaves us in a ſad and ſorrow-

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full condition in our apprehension; because the supp[ort] of our Faith is clouded from us. God doth sometimes with-draw himself from his dear servants, and doth suffer them to loose the sense of their Faith for a time, to make them prize it the more, and to be the more careful of it, this God will also do by laying his rod of correction heavy upon us, if he seeth that we watch not carefully over our Faith, that we are careless in the use and exercise of it, that we sleep in security, or lye dead in our sins without repentance, or if we abuse his love and goodnesse to us: for then he will leave us to our selves, to let us see our own weaknesse without his assisting grace. Upon these and the like occasions the devill will be ready to take his advantage, to assault us with his temptations, to make us doubt of the love and favour of God, when afflictions presse sore upon us; also to aggravate our sins, or else to hide them out of our sight, as he did *David*'s sin of adultery, if by any means he can, to keep us in unbelief, or without repentance, that we may not recover the sense and comfort of our Faith: for his main drift is, at last to drive us into despair.

It is a cunning policy of the devil, and full of danger, if he can keep us from the sight and sense of our sins, that we should not confesse them, and lay them open before God with a truly humbled & penitent heart, that so by our repentance we may have an holy assurance of the pardon of them: For then wil our Faith break forth as the Sun out of a cloud, to warm and refresh our souls with spirituall consolation: for we cannot loose the habit of Faith, though the sense of it may be taken from us for a time. Sometimes God himself will sift and winnow us as wheat, to cleanse us from our chaffe, to keep us from spirituall pride, and to humble us for our sins. Thus he sifted the house of *Israel*, as he saith by his Prophet [a] *For lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among the nations like as corn is sifted in a sive, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.* Amos

Though God doth ſometimes deal thus rigorouſly with us, and doth leave us no hope to ſupport our Faith; yet not the leaſt grain of his corn ſhall fall upon the earth, but our Faith ſhall recover her ſtrength again.

It is onely ſin that makes a ſeparation between God
Iſa. 59.2. and us, according to this of the Prophet, [b] *But your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God, and your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

Cant. 5. [c] It was ſin that cauſed Chriſt withdraw himſelf from his Spouſe; becauſe ſhe would not open to him when he knocked; but when he was gone and paſt, ſhe was in a wofull and comfortleſſe condition. Nothing can ſo much afflict us as the loſſe of our heavenly Fathers love, and nothing can ſhake our Faith ſo much, as when our ſouls are perplexed, becauſe in our own apprehenſion, God is either become our enemy; or elſe he hath quite forſaken us. How did *Job* complain in his great afflictions? [d] *My*
Job 30. 28. *bowels boiled and reſted not, I went mourning without the Sun: My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burnt with heat; my harp alſo is turned to mourning, and my Organ into the voice of them that weep.*

Holy *Davids* Faith was brought to ſo low a degree by the ſenſe of the burden of his ſin, and by the apprehenſion of the diſpleaſure of God for it, that he cryed to the
Pſal. 38.4, Lord, ſaying, [e] *Forſake me not, O Lord: O my God, be*
23. *not far from me: make haſte to help me, O Lord, my ſalvation* And again he thus cryeth unto God in the bitterneſſe of his ſoul; [f] *Hear me ſpeedily, O Lord: my ſpirit*
Pſal. 143. *faileth, hide not thy face from me, leſt I be like unto them that*
7. *go down into the pit.* [g] *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord,*
13. *for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long ſhall I take counſel in my ſoul, having ſorrow in my heart dayly? How long ſhall mine enemies be exalted over me?*

Surely *David* had at this time little or no ſenſe of Faith to truſt and depend upon God. Theſe and the like are the dolefull complaints of Gods children when they

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are overwhelmed with ſorrowes, or feel any ſpiritual deſertions; in ſo much as they cannot receive comfort, until the holy Ghoſt, who is the true Comforter, doth give them ſome aſſurance of the grace and favour of God.

Wherefore it is evident, that our Faith may be ſo ſtrongly aſſaulted with ſorrows and grief of heart, that we are not able to hold out, but are ready to ſink under the preſſure of our miſery, becauſe it will take away the ſenſe of our faith, which muſt uphold us; but ſpecially when the guilt of ſin lyeth upon the conſcience; for that will bring us to ſuch an apprehenſion of a ſpiritual deſertion, that we can feel no comfort in God for the time: for it will ſtop the current of all true conſolation to our afflicted ſpirits, which we cannot have but by Faith in Chriſt, and nothing will take impreſſion in us to comfort us, ſo long as we are under the guilt of ſin; but theſe or the like uncomfortable complaints will be ready to be uttered, that God hath quite forſaken us, that there is no hope for us in Chriſt, and we cannot believe that there is any ſalvation for us, becauſe our ſins are ſo many and ſo grievous.

If we are thus afflicted and perplexed in mind, that feares and doubtings of ſalvation trouble us, becauſe our Faith is ſo weak that we cannot diſcern it; this will give us great ſatisfaction and comfort, if we conſider that our ſalvation dependeth, not upon the ſtrength of our Faith, but upon the truth of it: for the weakeſt Faith, if it be true, is effectual to ſalvation, as well as the ſtrongeſt.

Alſo, if we conſider that faith is a grace which is grounded upon a ſure rock, even upon Chriſt Jeſus, againſt whom no created power can prevail; and that the ſtrength of our Faith doth not conſiſt in our hold upon Chriſt: for then every temptation, or guſt of affliction, would make us let goe our hold, and ſo loſe it, but it conſiſteth in that firm and ſtrong hold that Chriſt

hath

hath of us, who will not ſuffer any to pluck us out of his hand, according to this of the Pſalmiſt, [h] *I am continually with thee; thou haſt holden me by my right hand, thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſell, and afterward receive me to glory.* Wherefore though we are brought to ſo low an ebb, that we have loſt the ſenſe of our Faith, yet it is a ſure evidence, that once we did injoy it, and that there hath been a ſpiritual life in us, which cannot be but by Faith, and this ſpiritual life is not quite extinct in us; becauſe we have ſtill a ſpiritual ſenſe, though it be of loſſe.

The ſenſe of a temporal loſſe is a manifeſt ſign of a temporal life: for a dead man hath no ſenſe, either of loſſe or of gain; ſo likewiſe the ſenſe of a ſpiritual loſſe, of that which formerly we did truly injoy, is as well an evident ſign of a ſpiritual life, as is the ſenſe of a ſpiritual gain.

From hence a poor languiſhing ſoul may draw much comfort, if he doth fear a ſpiritual deſertion; becauſe he hath no comfortable ſenſe of his faith: for his faith is thus clouded, the habit of it ſtill remaineth, though he cannot diſcern it.

As the hearbs in winter are hidden under ground for a time, becauſe they are nipt in with the cold froſts, and the warmth of the Sun is gone from them; but the Sun will return again in his ſtrength, and will diſperſe the cold, and bring them again out of the earth by the vertue and ſtrength of his comfortable beames, to make them flouriſh, and to be as fruitful as before. So it is with Faith, it may be kept out of ſight for a time, if it be nipt with the cold froſts of affliction, or if the Sun of righteouſneſſe hath withdrawn his comfortable beames from it; but here is our hope and comfort, [i] that *the Sun of righteouſneſſe will return again with healing in his wings*, to diſpel all afflictions and ſorrows, to heal all our ſpiritual wounds, and hidings from God, and to ſtabliſh us in the aſſurance of the love and favour of God.

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The Stability of true Faith.

WE are come now in the laſt place, through the aſſiſtance of Gods good Spirit, to the ſtability of faith, which will ſatisfie and comfort every diſtreſſed ſoul that is doubtful of his ſalvation, weak in faith, and afraid of death, and of the laſt judgement, through the wicked ſuggeſtions of the devil, and by the aggravation of their ſinnes. Though the apprehenſion of Gods anger will cloud the ſenſe of our faith, though afflictions will ſift it, and winnow it as wheat, though ſin will wound it, and the devil ſometimes foil it, yet nothing can kill it, and nothing ſhall be able to overthrow it; not the leaſt grain of Gods corn ſhall fall upon the earth; the habit of faith cannot be loſt, though we may looſe the comfort of it for a time: for God hath given the gift of perſeverance to this faith, and to no other.

So long as we live in the fleſh we are ſubject to many temptations and backſlidings from God, we are ready to fall into many groſſe and dangerous ſinnes, which will bereave us of all ſpiritual comfort for the time; yet our faith in Chriſt will appear again, and the Sun of righteouſneſſe will ſhine upon us, for Chriſt will not ſuffer us totally and finally to fall away from him; for our faith is built upon a ſure foundation, againſt which no violence of temptations, and no ſtormes of perſecution can prevail. [a] Chriſt doth compare a righteous man to him that *built an houſe, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock, and when the flood aroſe, the ſtream beat vehemently upon that houſe and could not ſhake it, for it was founded on a rock.* Chriſt is the foundation of our faith, he is the rock of our ſalvation, [b] and *therefore*, as the wiſe man ſaith, *we ſhall never be removed.* Thus *David* ſheweth the ſtability of the faithful. [c] *The Lord redeemeth the ſoul of his ſervants, and none of them that truſt in him*

[a] Luk. 6.

[b] Prov. 10.

[c] Pſal. 34.

him ſhall be deſolate. Alſo thus ſaith the Pſalmiſt, [d] *They* Pſal. 125. 1
that truſt in the Lord ſhall be as Mount Zion, *which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.* And to make this
John 3. 16 truth undeniable, thus ſaith Chriſt himſelf, [e] *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Why then ſhould we faint under any temptation? Why ſhould we let goe the anchor of our hope? If we hold faſt to our faith, it will not deceive us, Chriſt will not ſuffer us to depart from him for ever. If we ſin God will chaſtiſe us, and he will hide his face from us; but if we repent, amend, and turn unto him, he will have mercy on us, he will pity us, he will heal the bones which he hath broken, and will reſtore us again to the joy of his ſalvation.

There are divers ſound reaſons to prove the ſtability of faith in thoſe that belong unto Chriſt, that they ſhall never totally and finally fall away from grace; but they ſhall be raiſed up again by repentance, though they doe ſometimes fall into fearful and dangerous ſins.

The firſt reaſon is taken from Gods free election, which ever remaineth ſure and unchangeable; for what he hath decreed in his ſecret Counſel muſt ſtand firm,
Rom. 8. 29 and cannot be altered. Thus ſaith the Apoſtle, [f] *God*
1 Pet. 1. 2. *did foreknow ſome from eternity; whom he did elect and predeſtinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, whom alſo he did effectually call, and them he juſtified in the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, and thoſe are ſure to be glorified: for who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect, whom he hath juſtified? who is he that condemneth? ſeeing Chriſt died for us, and is riſen again, and is now at the right hand of God, and maketh interceſſion for us:* therefore he concludes, that *nothing can ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* Alſo the ſame Apoſtle ſaith in
2 Tim. 2. 19. another place, [g] That *the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.*

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The ſecond reaſon is drawn from the vertue and ſtrength of the Covenant of Grace. A Covenant between man and man is an ingagement of great force, and the ſervants of God did alwayes exactly keep it. how ſtrong then is that Covenant, which God himſelf hath made with us, which his own dear Son hath ſealed with his bloud, and which God hath made of his own free grace and favour to us poor miſerable ſinners, which Chriſt hath procured for us? [h] God made a Covenant with *Noah* and he hath kept it to this day. Alſo God made diverſe Covenants with *Abraham*, and he performed them all. [i] *Abraham* made a Covenant with *Abimelech*, and did preciſely keep it. This new Covenant is for ever, and it is ſo ſtrongly confirmed, that we cannot queſtion the performance of it on Gods part, whom in his own Eſence is immutable and unchangeable; and though we cannot perform our conditions to God, yet Chriſt hath performed them for us, and will alſo eſtabliſh us in the fear of God, that we ſhall never depart from him. Thus ſaith the Lord by his Prophet, [k] *I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my people: and they ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, know the Lord: for they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them, even unto the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their ſin no more.* And again, *thus ſaith the Lord,* [l] *And I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.*

[h] Gen.

[i] Gen.

[k] Jer. 31. 33, 34.

[l] Jer.

Wherefore, ſeeing we have this Covenant of grace from God, and thus confirmed with the ſeal of Chriſts bloud, we may reſt confident, that if we are ingrafted into Chriſt by a true and lively Faith, we are then inveſted into this New Covenant, and every condition and Promiſe therein contained ſhall be performed to the uttermoſt, which doth give us an holy aſſurance, that

we ſhall never totally and finally fall away from God.

The third Reaſon for the ſtability of the Faithfull is grounded upon the power of God; for as *Peter* ſaith, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *we are kept by the power of God, through Faith unto ſalvation.* The Lord Jehovah is our keeper, the Lord is our defence, all power is from him, and no created power can take us out of his hand. Chriſt is alſo our good Shepherd, and we are his ſheep, though we go aſtray and wander out of the way in the Wilderneſſe of this world; yet Chriſt will not looſe us but will ſeek us up, and bring us again unto his fold. n *Chriſt knoweth his ſheep, and will give unto them eternall life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any man pluck them out of his hand. My father ſaith he, which gave them me is greater then all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand.* Wherefore, if there be any confidence to be put in the Almighty power of God, if any truſt in the care of Chriſt over his flock, or any truth in his promiſes to his ſheep, we need not doubt of our perſeverance in grace, and in the truth, we need not fear the malice, the cunning, or the power of the Devil, that he can overthrow our Faith, or deſtroy the habit of it that is planted in our hearts by the holy Ghoſt.

Fourthly, the ſtability of our Faith is firmly grounded upon the faithfulneſſe of God, according to this of *Paul*, 1 Theſſ. 5. 23. o *And the very God of peace ſanctifie you wholly; and I pray God your whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and body be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: Faithfull is he that* 1 Cor. 1. 8. *calleth you who alſo will do it.* Alſo thus he ſaith, p *God ſhall alſo confirm you unto the end that ye may be blameleſſe in the day of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. God is faithfull, by whom ye were called unto the fellowſhip of his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Deut. 7. 9. Thus ſaith *Moſes* to the children of *Iſrael*, q *Know therefore, that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithfull God, which keepeth Covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his Commandements to a thouſand generations.* Holy *David* had great experience of Gods faithfulneſſe to him

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and therefore he ſaith, [r] that *the faithfulneſſe of God reacheth to the clouds.* And again he ſaith, [s] *Thy faithfulneſſe is unto all generations; thou haſt eſtabliſhed the earth, and it abideth.*

We may therefore reſt upon the faithfulneſſe of God, as well as upon his power, for the keeping of his Covenant, for the performing of his Promiſes, for his aid and aſſiſting grace in all our temptations: [t] *for God is faithfull, who will not ſuffer us to be tempted above that we are able: but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that we may be able to bear it.* Alſo, in all our afflictions, miſeries and calamities that we ſuffer in a good Cauſe, God will keep and preſerve our ſouls from hurt, and therefore thus ſaith Peter, [u] *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithfull Creatour.*

Thus ſaith the Lord unto his People, [w] *I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſſe, and in judgement, and in loving kindneſſe, and in mercies, I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulneſſe, and thou ſhalt know the Lord.*

If we are thus betrothed unto God in faithfulneſſe, in judgement and in righteouſneſſe, then we cannot be quite ſeparated from him, and our Faith in Chriſt which, is the inſtrument of our betrothing, cannot be quite loſt.

The fifth reaſon why the Faithfull cannot finally fall away from God, is taken from the love of God: [x] *for thoſe whom he loveth, God loveth to the end.* Love is eſſentiall in God, and he can as well deny his own Being, as deny his love to thoſe that are united unto Chriſt by Faith, and his love to them endureth for ever: [y] *For nothing can ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.*

Thus ſaith *John* the beloved Diſciple of Chriſt, [z] *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins.* Again he

ſaith thus, *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.* Wherefore by our love to our neighbour we may know what love dwelleth in us, how we love God, and whether God dwelleth in us. If we be in this gracious condition, that God hath ſet his love upon us, we cannot then loſe this principall grace of
1. 4. 30 Faith, which is the bond of Gods love to us; and we cannot fall quite away from God; becauſe [a] *we are ſealed with the Spirit of God unto the day of Redemption.*

The ſixth reaſon is grounded upon the merits and interceſſion of Chriſt. This is a ſtrong reaſon ſo to ſtabliſh our Faith, that it ſhall never be overthrown, for by the merit of his blood we are redeemed out of the captivity of ſin and Satan; this was an infinite price which Chriſt paid for our redemption; whereby alſo we are freed from the curſe of the Law, and from the condemning power of ſin, becauſe we are made one with Chriſt by Faith. If therefore we can be brought again under the ſame bondage and ſlavery, or under the ſame curſe or condemnation of ſin, which we ſhall be if our union with Chriſt can be broken, then we ſhall have but little benefit by our redemption, and Chriſt hath paid that great price for us to little purpoſe; alſo we are not then perfectly made free, but are ſtill the ſervants of ſin. But Chriſt hath finiſhed the whole work of our Redemption, the eternall ſon of God hath made us free, ſin hath therefore no more power over us, and the Devil cannot prevail againſt us to break that union which is between Chriſt and us by Faith.

Wherefore this conſideration will much ſtrengthen our Faith againſt all oppoſition and adverſary power, that if we are redeemed by Chriſt, and made free by him, our ſtate and condition is firm and ſure, it cannot be removed, for Chriſt will looſe none of thoſe whom he hath bought with ſo great a price, and made free by his own power, and for whom he hath made interceſſion to his Father.

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If our Faith should fail, then Christs intercession for us must fail, we shall then lose Christ and all the benefits that come by him, we shall lose all true comfort in this life, and eternall blessednesse in the life to come. If we conceive thus meanly of the merits and intercession of Christ, it is blasphemy in the highest degree.

The seventh reason for the stability of Faith, is drawn from the nature of saving grace, which is in corruptible seed, and planted in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, whereby there is a new creation wrought in us: for *Peter* saith, [b] *that we are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* [b] 1 Pet. 1

Our first birth is of corruptible seed, which is mortall and fadeth away like the flower of the field; but our Regeneration, or second birth comes from an immortal principle, which cannot decay but continueth for ever. This Birth is wrought by the Spirit of God, and it hath a spirituall life by Faith in Christ, which can never dye, though it may lye gasping for a time through some violent temptation, or sore tryall: For if God begins to work a Work of Grace in us, he will not leave it, untill it be finished.

From hence we may draw great consolation to our selves in the apprehension that we are weak in grace, for though we finde but the beginnings of our Regeneration wrought in us, God will not leave his own Work imperfect. Though we cannot perform our duties and services to God as we ought; yet God will accept the will for the deed in Christ, if it proceeds from a faithfull heart: and though we find but some parts of true repentance wrought in us, as to our own apprehension, God will go on in his Work of Reformation, untill there be a through change wrought both in soul and body, to newnesse of life. If Faith, or any other spirituall grace be weak in us, it will grow stronger, it will increase and continue; because the Holy Ghost will water his own seed which he hath planted:

with his ſpirituall dewes from above.

The laſt reaſon for the confirmation of our Faith is this, becauſe the holy Ghoſt doth dwell in our hearts by faith, and where he doth ſettle his habitation, there he will abide for ever. If our hearts are purified by Faith in the blood of Chriſt, then we are the ſpirituall Temple of God, and the Holy Ghoſt will dwell there, according to this of *Paul*, [c] *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* Thus ſaith *John*, [d] *Whoſoever ſhall confeſſe that Jeſus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*

The holy Ghoſt is that true Comforter, whom Chriſt hath ſent from the Father to be with every Member of his Church, to dwell with them, to be in them, and to abide with them for ever; and where he is, there no grace can be wanting.

If we injoy his comfortable ſociety he will then lead us into all truth; for he is the Spirit of Truth: no erroneous Doctrine ſhall infect our ſouls, but we ſhall rightly underſtand the wayes of God, and be able in ſome meaſure to walk in them: He will protect us in all dangers, he will comfort us in all our ſorrowes, he will uphold our faith againſt all aſſaults and temptations, and will give us ſtrength of grace to hold out and perſevere in all our tryalls unto the end.

Wherefore grieve not this holy Spirit, by whom we have ſo much comfort in all conditions of life, and by whom we are ſealed unto the day of redemption, who will confirm and ſtabliſh us in the Faith of Chriſt, that we may continue ſtedfaſt, untill we ſhall come to live and reign with our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt for ever in heaven

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The Concluſion of this Treatiſe.

NOw for the Concluſion of this Work, I do earneſtly requeſt every Chriſtian Reader to enter into a ſerious conſideration with himſelf which way the thoughts of his minde are chiefly bent, and upon what he doth ſet the Meditations of his heart, that he may know whether his way be ſteered towards heaven or not: for they do neereſt affect his ſoul, and plainly ſhew what is his chiefeſt joy and delight.

If his thoughts are too much ſet upon the vanities of the world, then his heart cannot be Faithfull towards God, and there will be no place in his ſoul to receive that true comfort which otherwiſe he might have in the ſweet fruition of God by his pious and devout Meditations.

Alſo, if he delighteth to ruminate upon his carnall pleaſures, or upon any other evill concupiſcence, or to call to remembrance with approbation his former iniquities, he doth ſin over again thoſe former ſins, and doth defile his precious ſoul with uncleanneſſe and pollutions; whereas both his ſoul and his body ought to be kept clean, and undefiled, that the holy Ghoſt may delight to dwell therein, and that his heart and affections may be alwayes fit for heavenly contemplations. So likewiſe if his chiefeſt ſtudy and care be to adorn his Profeſſion of godlineſſe onely with a ſpecious form and fair outſide of purity and holineſſe, and doth not faithfully ſtrive to ſhew the power of it in his life and converſation he deludeth his own ſoul, and doth feed it with the meer ſhadow of conſolation, and not with the ſubſtance of ſound comfort which is onely found in the power of godlineſſe.

If theſe or the like be the meditations of our hearts,

od if our affections keep at so far a distance from God, and from all true goodnesse, that we have scarcely any thoughts tending that way; it is then no marvell if we misse the comfort which our souls desire, when we are in any anguish of Spirit, or under the buffetings of Satan, and it is no wonder if we are sad and cast down, and go mourning all the day long, when the times are dangerous and full of troubles, and we can hear nothing but complaining in our streets: for hereby we have no support for our Faith, no Anchor for our hope, and no sure rock to rest upon, that our souls may be truly comforted in the day of visitation. Well may our spirits droup when we are peached with pain, or sickneſſe, with wants, troubles, or afflictions, if we rruſt onely to earthly means and comforts: for we can finde nothing in them, but vanity and vexation of spirit, which will sooner increase our sorrowes, than comfort and support us under them.

Wherefore if we will refresh our soul with true comfort, when they are pressed with any sadnesse, or sorrow, we must fetch our comfort from above, our delight must be to Meditate on heavenly things, our hearts and affections must be taken off from these things here below, and raised up to contemplate those things which concern the Kingdom of Heaven. Christ and him crucified must be the subject of our Meditations, if we will have any spirituall consolation, and the holy Ghost is the onely meanes to convey this comfort to our hearts from Christ: for he doth work all sanctifying graces in us, which are as so many pipes wherein this heavenly liquor doth swiftly run down from Christ to us, and Faith doth fasten these golden pipes unto Christ, who is the Fountain of all true consolation. Our repentance can give us no assurance of the Pardon of our sins, unlesse Faith doth fasten it unto Christ, our hope can give us no comfort in the Promises of God, if Faith doth not fasten it unto Christ: our patience can give us no comfort in our afflictions

flictions and tribulations, except Faith doth fasten it to Christ, who hath sanctified all our afflictions by his own sufferings.

Thus Faith doth make these and all other saving graces effectuall and comfortable to us, because it doth bring them home unto Christ.

Wherefore if thou hast any care of thy soul, to comfort it when it is sad and heavy, to feed it when it is hungry, to refresh it when it is thirsty; ruminate well upon these things, and if thou hast any holy desire to be weaned from the love of this world, and to be familiarly acquainted with God, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and to injoy the Communion of the holy Ghost to direct thee in the way to eternall happinesse; thou must then daily exercise and practise this holy and Religious duty of zealous and devout Meditation in heavenly and spirituall things.

FINIS.